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James M. Smith  
June 1833

*This is a very fine book.  
L. L.*

AN  
INQUIRY  
INTO THE  
PRINCIPLES OF  
HARMONY IN LANGUAGE,  
AND OF THE  
MECHANISM OF VERSE,  
MODERN AND ANTIENT.

BY WILLIAM MITFORD, ESQUIRE.

---

THE SECOND EDITION,  
WITH IMPROVEMENT AND LARGE ADDITION.

---

Θεοὶ δὲ, οὐκ εἰράντες τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπίποννον πεφυκὸς γένος,  
ἀναπάυλας τε αὐλοῖς τῶν πόνων ἐτάξαντο τὰς τῶν ἑορτῶν ἀμοιβὰς—  
καὶ Μούσας ξυνεορτασὰς ἔδωσαν.——Τὰ μὲν οὖν ἄλλα ζῶα οὐκ  
ἔχουσιν αἴσθησιν τῶν ἐν ταῖς κινήσεσι τάξεων οὐδὲ ἀταξιῶν, οἷς δὴ Ῥυθμὸς  
ὄνομα καὶ Ἀρμονία· ἡμῖν δὲ Θεοὺς—δεδωκότας τὴν Ἐνρυθμον τε  
καὶ Ἐναρμόνιον αἴσθησιν.

Plat. de Leg. l. 2.

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LONDON:

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1804.



INQUIRY

THEORY

OF THE

ARTS

AND

OF THE

THEORY

OF THE

OF THE

THEORY

OF THE

OF THE

THEORY

TO  
JOHN GILPIN, ESQUIRE,

HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S VICE-CONSUL FOR THE STATES  
OF CONNECTICUT AND RHODE-ISLAND.

---

DEAR SIR,

THE book which I send you across the Atlantic, it was long my purpose to address to your late excellent Father; unable to foresee that delay in the completion of it, which has extended beyond the term of a life, to the great gratification of his friends, and extensive benefit among mankind, allowed by divine Providence to be full of years. But, in considering you as successor to his claim, I do not reckon that I am paying you any great compliment; knowing that I should have had to apologize to him, not for inscribing my book to him, but for having written it;—not perhaps for its defects so much as, if it might have any, for its merits. I will therefore, for apology to you, tell you how I came to write it.

When, now near half a century ago, I was taught by my invaluable friend, your

A 3

Father,

1127718

## DEDICATION.

Father, to scan the measures of the antient classical poetry, and at the same time to believe that, in our universities and principal schools, more importance was given to the study than it deserved, his authority would of course have sufficed to establish the tenet in my mind. It was however no light confirmation to find my Father's opinion concurring; which I was prepared to reckon of the higher authority, as he had passed through the discipline of Eton, where the study is peculiarly enforced, to that of Oxford, where it has always been in very high estimation. When nevertheless I found them agreeing also in asserting that some acquaintance with the mechanism of classical poetry was necessary to the scholar; when they added that, tho' the works of the Greek and Latin poets must be looked to for the standard of fine taste, yet that, to the English scholar, an acquaintance with English poetry was not less necessary; when, proceeding in the course thus pointed out, I found that to follow the Greek and Latin rules, for the mechanism of Greek and Latin verse, in writing was easy, but to comprehend the ground, to see the reason, and to understand the application, so that



## DEDICATION.

the voice might follow as well as the pen, and the ear might acknowledge its performance, not only was beyond me, but, as far as I could discover, beyond all teachers; when farther I observed that for the very different harmony of English verse no rule could be obtained, and yet the mechanism, under direction of the ear alone, was of easy execution, these contradictions engaged my thought. Passing to Oxford, the interest, once excited in the subject, was likely to be kept alive, by the ordinary course of pursuits there, and common topics of conversation. However on entering the world as a man, it was dissipated by the new glare of things and a view to higher interests; and it might never have been recollected but for an accidental occurrence. It is now five and thirty years ago, that, in my way from London to Exbury, passing through Southampton, I called upon my friend Mr. Pye, of Faringdon-house in Berkshire, since representative of that county in Parliament, and now poet-laureat, who was then residing there for the benefit of bathing. I found him with a book before him, consisting of Foster's and Galley's treatises on Accent and Quantity, bound together.

## DEDICATION.

With the warmth of youth, on the impulse of the moment, I expressed my wonder that he, a votary of fancy and the muses, could find patience for such dull and, I supposed, uninteresting controversy. He answered that the interest in the subject, so warmly and extensively taken of late among men of letters, had excited his curiosity, which had been gratified by elucidation of the subject itself, interesting inasmuch as it materially concerns the theory at least of versification; but he had found farther gratification from an account, in Foster's work, of the Greeks who, on the overthrow of the Constantinopolitan empire, spread their language and learning over western Europe. Thus my curiosity was excited, and the result was that I borrowed the book.

Among my oaks on the coast of Hampshire then was revived that interest in the subject, which had originated while I was a boy under your Father's care on the verge of the Surrey downs. The information collected in Foster's book from Greek and Latin writers, concerning Greek and Latin versification, gratified me highly; his mistakes concerning English versification, hurt me. It presently occurred that the former furnished no inconsiderable

## DEDICATION.

siderable assistance for detecting and even correcting the latter. A young mind, not then directed by any commanding interest to other pursuits, was thus easily engaged: and four or five years after, was published the first edition of the treatise on the Harmony of Language; a work, however, of which I soon learnt to see the imperfections so strongly, as to cease to desire that it should spread in the world.

Nevertheless I had the gratification to find that, tho sent abroad without a name, my book crept into some credit with those with whom I most desired it should have credit, those who could best see and appretiate its defects. Hence I was induced, as matter occurred, to note, with a view to future leisure, whatever might contribute to its improvement. And looking to your Father's practice, who did not scruple occasional remission of severer studies to write on the painter's art, I thought myself not without warrant, from his example, to give some of my time to inquiry concerning a sister art, which may surely claim the first dignity in the sisterhood. The subject indeed, to be completely treated, would require labor in no small amount, and qualifications perhaps hardly to be found in one  
man,



## DEDICATION.

man. For those who have sufficient book-learning, rarely possess any adequate knowledge of spoken languages; and where these acquisitions may meet, it can scarcely fail that pursuits more interesting will deny the necessary leisure, and perhaps the necessary inclination. In myself, I know, book-learning, acquaintance with living tongues, leisure, and industry, are all deficient; and yet I think it possible that more of all together may not soon meet in another. Hence I have been led to imagine that by prosecuting improvement of my early work, I might serve the cause of English letters: and thus it has at length been brought to the state in which it now passes to you.

In the cause of English letters, the new empire with which you have connected yourself; and in which you hold an official situation under the government of the mother-country, is interested equally with the mother-country itself. The people of both countries, by the favor of divine Providence, flourishing and spreading, are extending the use of their common language, already perhaps the richest of modern tongues in excellent works in every branch of literature. With their prosperity,  
the

## DEDICATION.

the interest of the topics I have treated of course extends. Nor are the humblest offices always the least important, but often the most useful and most necessary. That my book however should invite extensive reading, is out of question; it is only among the more diligent cultivators of English letters that it must look for consideration: but if it finds no favor with them, the failure will be owing, I think, to its own deficiency and not to a total insignificancy in its subject. Such as it is I trust you will accept it kindly, as a pledge of my respect for your late excellent Father and of friendship for yourself.

I am, dear sir,  
with much esteem and regard, yours,

WILLIAM MITFORD.

Exbury, June 1804.





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# ERRORS TO BE CORRECTED,

- 
- Page* 75. *line* 12. *for* like voice, *read* like the voice.  
 76. 24. *for* yet *r.* but.  
 103. 29. *for* neither *r.* either.  
 121. penult. *for* cource *r.* course.  
 171. 10. *for* if *r.* of.  
 172. 5. *for* Bih eore *r.* Bi heore.  
 176. 2. *after* irregularity, *efface* the comma.  
 191. 21. *for* i *r.* is.  
 198. 19. *for* probaverunt *r.* probaverunt.  
 242. 20. *for* if *r.* of.  
 263. 2. *for* Section VII. *r.* Section XIV.  
 291. 10. *after* words *insert* of Teutonic origin.  
 306. 22. *for* vede *r.* vedi.  
 323. last. *for* παναπασυ *r.* πανάπασυ  
 329. a note belonging to this page will be found in the  
 appendix at the end of the book.  
 385. 12. *for* sing *r.* sung.

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I N Q U I R Y  
INTO THE  
PRINCIPLES  
OF  
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SECTION I.

Cause of deficient Explanation of the Harmony of Language.  
Division of Language under two heads.—Origin of Verse.—  
Origin of Melody.—Definitions.—Origin of Measure.—Prin-  
ciples of the Harmony of Language, to be investigated only in  
living Speech.

**W**HAT constitutes that Harmony which is felt, more or less, by perhaps all the races of mankind, in their respective languages, and which is expressed, throughout Europe, by nearly the same word, adopted from the mother-tongue of science and fine taste, has engaged inquiry among all cultivated people. In our own country, especially of late years, publications, of which it is either the principal or an incidental subject, have been numerous. Disagreement among them indeed has abounded; but evidently much owing to a want of definition of terms, and much, or perhaps all the rest, to a deficiency  
B of

of preparatory analysis. For the very familiarity of those objects, the sounds of common discourse, among which the harmony of speech must be investigated, and the appearance of simplicity, which, to a transient view, they exhibit, have dissuaded that scrupulous examination which the real intricacy of their constituent parts required. To discuss minutely what is obvious to observation for all, within reach of the most ordinary talents, and almost of the lowest scholarship, was a task, of the needlessness of which hope would be the more readily entertained, both as the execution would be irksome to the writer, and as the fear would be reasonable, of disgust from it to the generality of readers. In truth, a particular curiosity only, with considerable respect and love for one's native language, can make the subject inviting. Nor will the praise of genius reward the best success in treating it. For no splendid talents are wanted, but patient diligence, and careful observation; none of the higher and more brilliant powers of eloquence, but studious choice of clear and close expression.

Nevertheless the cultivation of that harmony, whose principles remain yet so deficiently explained, has begun, we find, among all nations, in antiquity beyond tradition, and never ceased. Everywhere the first efforts of literary genius have been directed to the adorning of language, by an artificial arrangement of words, in measured order,  
cha-



characteristically differing from the flow of common discourse : and so great has been the estimation of this measured arrangement, and so extensive its use, that it forms one of two heads, under which all composition of words is divided ; whatever has an obvious regularity of measure, being called Poetry, and whatever has it not, being distinguished by the name of Prose.<sup>a</sup>

Poetry, or rather the mechanical part of Poetry, Verse, has apparently originated from a double purpose, to please the ear, and to impress the memory. While letters were unknown, and while, long after their introduction into some use, materials for the ready and extensive employment of them were undiscovered or scarce, the assistance, which the artificial, measured arrangement of words in verse, afforded the memory, was of high value. Verse then furnishing the best means known for retaining knowledge, as well as a lure to the labor of acquiring it, science was taught, history was preserved, and even laws were promulgated in verse.

Everywhere then, and in the earliest ages whence accounts have been transmitted, Poetry has had connection with Music. According to Lucretius, the wild melody of the woods, the song of birds, gave

<sup>a</sup> Poetry, Παισιχὴ, means a made and studied arrangement, a manufacture of words ; Prose, Πιζὴ Δείξις, a walking discourse, as if in opposition to the measured and studied movements of dance.

gave origin to the song of men.<sup>b</sup> But the song of birds, delightful by its melody, is without measure. The song of men, wild as that of birds, might please, but would want its most important use; for its melody, without measure, would load rather than assist the memory. The Melody then of the song of men may have been suggested by the song of birds; but whence hath its Measure come?

For this inquiry it may be advantageous to define some terms, the use of which will be requisite in the course of it.

Of the articulated sounds of which language is composed, the smallest integral, or portion which can exist as a whole by itself, is what we call a SYLLABLE. Of the unarticulated sounds which constitute Music, the smallest integral is what we call a NOTE. Among the properties of syllables then we must seek the principles of the harmony of language, as those of the harmony of music among its notes.

A musical note exists only in its specific tone. By TONE we mean sound, as it is characterized, not by any varieties of articulation, but by those indicated by the terms loud, soft, high, low, sharp, flat, shrill, deep.<sup>c</sup> Among our grammarians,

<sup>b</sup> At liquidas avium voces imitauer ore  
Ante fuit multo quam lævia carmina cantu  
Concelebrare homines possent, aureisque juvare.

LUCRET. l. 5. v. 1378.

<sup>c</sup> Thus I would confine the import of the word, tho it is  
sometimes

rians, instead of the word **TONE**, derived from the Greek, the word **ACCENT**, derived from the Latin, is in common use.

**SYLLABLE** exists by articulation ; with which tone, or accent, is necessarily co-existent, but not a specific tone. Any among the numerous varieties of tone, may co-exist with any among the innumerable varieties of syllable.

Varying tones, or accents, in pleasing succession, equally in music and in language, constitute **MELODY**.

The **TIME** employed in pronouncing a syllable, compared with the time employed in pronouncing other syllables, at the same rate of delivery, is called, in grammatical phrase, the **QUANTITY** of the syllable. The same thing, in speaking of a musical note, is called simply the **TIME**.

The term **MEASURE**, derived from the Latin, or **METER**, as we often call it, from the Greek, means measure of time, or quantity, as it is indicated by one note, or by a combination of notes in music, compared with other notes or combinations of notes, and by one syllable, or by a combination of syllables in speech, compared with other syllables or combinations of syllables.

For notes and syllables to indicate measure of time

sometimes used in a more extensive sense, including the distinctions of harsh and sweet, disagreeable and pleasing ; as we say the *tone* of an instrument, which the Italians better express by their word *voce*, the *voice* of the instrument.



time, their proportions to each other, as the musician performs and the speaker utters, must be obvious to the ear. If notes or syllables, heard in series, are all equal in length, or nearly so, their equality, or approximation to equality, will be readily perceived. If some are double in length to others, or nearly in that proportion, their difference will be readily perceived. Other proportions, whether approaching equality more than two and one, as three and two, or differing more than two and one, as five and two, will not readily impress their character upon the ear. Musical notes may be protracted and divided without other limitation than those of the composer's judgement and the performer's powers; but the proportionate measure of syllables is fixed, in many cases, by the nature of speech, and in most others by the custom of speaking. Syllables, therefore, to give obvious measure, must be equal, or without striking inequality; or they must differ as one and two, or so nearly in that proportion, as to impress the ear with the idea of that proportion and no other.

But a repetition of equal measures can produce no new character, and for want of variety, will presently fatigue the ear. The two measures, one double in length to the other, are therefore necessary for all composition of measure. Syllables, differing from each other in the proportions of one and two, are found sufficient for all purposes of composition in speech; tho music wants more variety,

ety. Two notes or two syllables, one double in length to the other, will form a compound measure, the contrast of whose parts will so mark it, that the ear will readily catch and retain its character. Equally also three notes or syllables, if one be equal to both the others, will have a decided character. These compound measures are what the Greeks distinguished by their term *RHYTHMUS*, which the Latin writers adopted. The former they called the *DOUBLE RHYTHMUS*, because one of its constituent parts was double in quantity to the other. The latter they called the *EVEN RHYTHMUS*, because readily resolved into two equal parts, one composed of one syllable, the other of two. If we have a word familiarized in our language, any received use of which may justify its employment to denote the same thing, it is *CADENCE*.<sup>d</sup>

But these two characters of *rhythmus* or *cadence*, are each capable of varieties. In the former the short syllable may either precede or follow the long one, and in the latter the two short syllables may either precede or follow the long one. In either

*rhythmus*,

<sup>d</sup> The word *Cadence*, seems to have been used by Bacon, according to the example quoted by Samuel Johnson, in his Dictionary, to signify what, in music, is now called a *close*, which Shakespear called a *fall*. But if the word *cadence* has now any determinate meaning in our language, it seems to be that aptly enough illustrated by Johnson in a quotation from the Farrier's Dictionary: "*Cadence* is an *equal measure* or *proportion*, which a horse observes in all his motions, when he is thoroughly maned."

rhythmus, whichever arrangement be taken, the quantity of time marked will be the same, but the character will be very different. This difference, produced by the different disposition of quantities, within the same cadence or rhythmus, is what the antients distinguished by the term *Foot*. Thus, whether a long syllable preceded a short one, or a short syllable preceded a long one, the rhythmus was the same, but the foot was different.\*

Moreover, tho equal notes, and equal syllables, can, of themselves, impress no character of compound measure, yet they may carry on an impression given. Thus, feet composed of two long syllables, filling the measure of the rhythmus indicated by one long and two short syllables, may be interwoven with feet composed of one long and two short, so as fully to carry on indication of the measure; and a foot composed of three short syllables, being commensurate with feet composed each of one long and one short, may also, without loss of the impression, be interwoven with them. In antient poetry we find the two principal cadences admitted each three varieties of feet. To the even rhythmus belonged the dactyl, anapest, and spondee; to the double rhythmus, the trochee, iambic, and tribrachys. Thence the former was called sometimes the dactylic, sometimes the anapestic rhythmus, the latter sometimes the trochaic, sometimes the iambic.

By

\* Occasion will occur in the sequel to speak further of this distinction, which is clearly and fully described by Quintilian.



By various composition then of these variously compounded measures, called feet, other larger measures were formed, called VERSES ; of which hereafter.

HARMONY, in language, is the result of a happy combination of measure and melody. In its original tongue, the Greek, the word harmony bore the same meaning when applied to music ; but modern use has, for that science, diverted it to another, or rather restrained it to a narrower signification, for which modern practice wanted a distinguishing name.

EUPHONY means sweet or pleasing sound, and CACOPHONY harsh or unpleasing sound, both abstractedly from any consideration of melody or measure.

MELODY is essential to MUSIC. The monotonous variations of a drum, however artificially and pleasingly varied, are still below music. They may assist occasionally ; but, to make music, there must be variety of TONE.

MEASURE is not essential to music, as the song of birds may prove. Nevertheless, measure is so highly and so obviously advantageous to music, that probably the music of a cultivated people never remained without it. Concurrence in song, tho but of two voices, can only be effected through measure, or, in musical language, KEEPING TIME. Without measure of time, obviously, time cannot be kept. Instrumental music, moreover, has been very antiently, and very extensively, almost

almost universally, associated with song; but without measure they can hold no association.

From earliest antiquity then, and in the most uncultivated state in which we find or read of nations, some measured action of the body, such as we call DANCE, has been familiar; generally associated with music, and sometimes with song. Measure is perhaps not absolutely essential to dance, any more than to music; but to a concurrence in dance, equally as in song, and to the association of dance with music, measure is indispensable.

It seems then to have been the gratification arising from concurrence in song and in dance, and from the association of instrumental music with both, that has given origin to Measure. Thus introduced for its use, measure has been found grateful, to the ear in music, to the eye in dance, and so altogether has gained the consideration which it has held among all nations.

But as song and dance and instrumental music might be exhibited separately, and each afford still its proper gratification; so song, divested of its musical melody, might be recited with the tones only of ordinary speech, and, distinguished still from ordinary speech by its measures, would please by its own peculiar powers. It is not the way of human invention always to begin with the simple, and proceed, in the course of improvement, to the complex, but often the contrary

trary. Accounts of antient times, in different countries, accordingly, mark the early, and perhaps original connection of poetry with music, and their late separation. In our own language, the word SONG remains yet, in poetical use, a term synonymous with poetry. Modern practice in prose, confining that word to a narrower signification, but a signification still nearly co-extensive with its antient import (beyond which antient language had no want) has formed from the Greek and Latin, for modern purposes, the words POETRY and VERSE.

Distinctions of TONE and of TIME, in syllables, being the sources of MELODY and MEASURE, and consequently the efficient of HARMONY IN LANGUAGE, those distinctions must be the objects of investigation for whoever would become acquainted with that harmony. But such investigation would be vainly attempted in a language whose living pronuntiation were not perfectly familiar to the investigator, and vainly explained to those not perfectly acquainted with the living pronuntiation of the language in which the explanation were communicated. The writer indeed will hardly succeed on such a subject, whose native speech cannot bear him through it. Fortunately, the English, as opportunity will be taken to show, is favorable; and, with whatever disadvantages, perhaps, among languages now spoken in Europe, altogether the most favorable for the purpose.

Proposing



Proposing then to investigate the principles of harmony in human speech among the sounds of the English language, and to explain them through the English language, it will be necessary not only to survey its sounds carefully, but also to consider attentively the modes in use for communicating ideas of them by writing; without which it were impossible to be secure against being widely misunderstood. For, tho English speech is favorable, yet English orthography is the most disadvantageous of any used among European nations. Nor will the labors of those who, of late years, have employed much ability, with painful diligence, in the endeavor to mark, among the anomalies of that orthography, the proper sound of every word, avail me so far as to supersede all necessity for my toiling after them on the same ground. Profiting gratefully from assistance they afford, I find my own arrangement necessary for my own purpose; which fortunately requires far less than their extent of detail. Nevertheless it puts me under one peculiar disadvantage; for I must request the reader's pursued attention to a kind of lexicographical matter. With my utmost endeavors therefore to obviate for him the disgust of superfluous, as well as the disappointment of deficient explanation, I shall have to put his patience (at least I cannot but apprehend it for some not wholly incurious on the subject) to a fearful trial.

## SECTION II.

Survey of the Sounds of English Speech, and of the Manner of representing them by written Characters.

THE purpose of alphabetical writing is to represent language to the eye, by the signs of elementary sounds. For the representation to be perfect, there should be a sign for every elementary sound of the language to be represented, marking that sound only. But a complete alphabet of any language is unknown. Before the art could reach perfection, custom has everywhere fixed the practice; and, for common convenience, an ascertained practice, however imperfect, being preferable to the variation necessary for attaining perfection, what arbitrary custom had once established, science has generally feared afterward to alter. Unfortunately for the English language, custom, distracted between two widely differing idioms, the Anglo-Saxon, and the Norman-French, has, in fixing its orthography, not only neglected science, but allowed capricious ignorance to riot. Hence it will be necessary, with stricter care, to survey the established representation of the sounds of English speech by written characters; to unfold its perplexities; to discover, among its anomalies, what may pass for rules; and to fix upon a mode of pointing out to the reader, with certain precision,  
any

#### 14 INQUIRY INTO THE PRINCIPLES OF

any sound of the language, of which there may be occasion to treat.

In our language, and in most or perhaps all others, the name **LETTER** is, in ordinary speech, equally given to the elementary sound, and to the character representing it; simple terms failing to distinguish things so different. The words **ELEMENT** to signify the sound, and **CHARACTER** to signify its representative, are often of advantageous use, but not so appropriated as to be, on all occasions, sufficiently discriminating. Care therefore will be requisite to present those two descriptions of things always clearly separated to the reader's view.

Among the elementary sounds of speech, divided into **VOWELS** and **CONSONANTS**, the vowels hold a great preëminence. A vowel alone may stand as a syllable; without a vowel can be no complete articulation; all sonorousness, all sweetness in language arise from vowels.

The **SIMPLE VOWEL-SOUNDS**, clearly and strongly distinguished in English speech, are **SEVEN**; but the **VOWEL-CHARACTERS** of the English alphabet are, in effect, only **FIVE**, *a, e, i, o, u*; for *w* and *y*, as proper vowels, are meer duplicates of *u* and *i*.

But the defects in the representation of the vowel-sounds, considerable from real want of distinguishing characters, have been made very much greater



greater by perverse use of the characters we possess.

The seven vowels of English speech, to state them in the order most in use among our grammarians, are,

First, the open or broad sound of A, heard in *wan, warren, call, falling* :

Secondly, the middle sound of A, in *can, fallow, father, example* :

Thirdly, the close, or slender sound of A, in *tale, famous* :

Fourthly, the sound of E, in *he, evil* :

Fifthly, the sound of O, in *so, rosy* :

Sixthly, the open sound of U, in *dull, running, jully* :

Seventhly, the close sound of U, in *bull, fully, truly*.

But, beside these seven varieties of simple vowels, there are, in English speech, four proper diphthongs. Borrowing, in part, Walker's definition, I would call a diphthong, "a compound vowel, requiring more than one conformation of the organs for utterance;" but, I would proceed, "the double conformation producing two distinguishable sounds, yet so sliding one into the other as to offer no discernible point of separation."

Of the four diphthongs of English pronunciation, two are represented by single, and two by double characters.

First, the sound of I, in *final* :

Secondly,

Secondly, the sound of *u*, in *due*, *usual* :<sup>f</sup>

Thirdly, the sound of *oi*, in *coin*, *toilsome* :

Fourthly, the sound of *ou*, in *out*, *abounding*.

Y and W, for their diphthongal, as for any simple vowel-sound, are but duplicates of I and W, and so *oy* and *ow* are but duplicates of *oi* and *ou*. The notations *eu*, *ew*, *ieu*, *iew*, and *ui*, represent no other sounds than are commonly indicated by *u* alone. Thus *brute* differs from *fruit*, and *few* from *view*, only in the sound of the first letter ; and we write indifferently *fewel* or *fuel*. The other diphthongal notations of English orthography, *ai*, *ay*, *au*, *aw*, *ea*, *ei*, *eo*, *ey*, *ia*, *ie*, *oa*, mark no diphthongal pronunciation, (the affirmative *ay* forms a single exception) nor represent any sound in English speech, different from those, already noticed, which are commonly represented by single vowel-characters. As representatives of simple vowels, they will demand future attention.

The distinct varieties, then, of VOWEL-SOUNDS in English speech, are no less than ELEVEN ; being seven simple vowels, and four proper diphthongs.

But beside these varieties of sound, there is a variety arising from difference of TIME employed in the enunciation of the same sound.

Six

<sup>f</sup> These sounds of *i* and *u*, have been reckoned among diphthongs by Wallis, one of the earliest and the most learned, and by Sheridan and Walker, among the most eminent of the later English grammarians. That they are truly diphthongal, must, I think, be obvious to any ear fairly attending to them.

Six of the seven vowels of English speech have, in some syllables a longer, in others a shorter TIME, or, in the grammatical word, QUANTITY, appropriated to them. Nor is the difference small or unimportant, but, on the contrary, such as to give to each decidedly its own character, so that the distinction is of the essence of the language. No English voice fails to express, no English ear to perceive, the difference between the long sound, for instance, of the second vowel, the middle *a*, in *father*, *passing*, *example*, and the same sound, short, as the custom of speech requires, in *fathom*, *passive*, *ample*. Were one used for the other, we should risk to misunderstand the words ; we should certainly condemn the pronuntiation. No colloquial familiarity or hurry will substitute the short proportion of vowel-sound for the long ; nor will any solemnity of occasion warrant the use of the long proportion for the short. In Scottish pronuntiation indeed, often, the English long vowels are short, and the short long ; and this is not least among the causes of difficulty, for southern Englishmen, to understand their own language in the pronuntiation of the northern part of the island. To speak English properly, and to be intelligible, the established proportions of the long and short vowels, whatever be the rate of delivery, must be observed. In just delivery those proportions will be found as two to one, or as nearly so as any mensuration (a matter

C

which



which will occur to be further spoken of in the sequel) can ascertain.

That such difference of length in the vowel-sounds of a language must be of great importance to its harmony, is obvious. Toward the investigation therefore of that harmony, it will be necessary to observe, with some care, how, in the irregularity of English orthography, the long and the short vowels are variously represented by letters.

Common, or rather universal, as we find, among languages, the want of distinguishing signs for long and short vowels, and faulty as English orthography now is, yet its better spirit, in early times, had a disposition to supply the want, and found means often actually to mark for the eye the different lengths of vowel-sounds in pronuntiation. Even yet some relics of the advantageous practice remain, fortunately fixed by the custom of writing; not all of equal value, but all requiring some notice.

The long sounds of vowels are indicated, in English orthography, in four different ways:

First, by a very advantageous and unexceptionable method, the duplication of the letter, as in *meet*, *proceed*, *seemly*, *door*, *floor*.

Secondly, by a diphthongal notation, very inconveniently replete with confusion, as in *rain*, *break*, *meat*, *rein*, *deceit*, *broad*, *road*, *soul*, *bowl*. In the two last examples the fifth long vowel is represented by the proper representatives of the  
fourth

fourth diphthong. But for our knowlege of the words we should suppose the fourth diphthong indicated, as in *foi*l and *how*l. Formerly, indeed, the pronuntiation of most of those words probably was diphthongal, as of some of them, in some provincial dialects, it still remains.

Thirdly, a silent *ε*, following a consonant which follows a vowel, indicates that preceding vowel to be long. This method has been introduced into our orthography with French words, ending with what the French grammarians call their feminine *ε*. Reasonable in the French, which requires a representative sign of its feminine *ε*, the practice in our language, which neither has nor should desire to have so imperfect and half articulate a vowel-sound, is irrational enough, and stands only by custom. Nevertheless, as often as our silent *ε* indicates the length of a preceding vowel, in the want of other indications warranted by custom, it is not without value. The notation may indeed be considered as diphthongal, with the representative marks divided; the *ε* being written after the consonant, under arbitrary controul of the custom of orthography, to be pronounced before it. The method however, with its irrationality, has also its practical inconveniencies. At the end of words, *E* is so commonly silent, that a mark is wanting where it is to be pronounced, and such a mark is not yet agreed upon. In the middle of words it is commonly omitted, on account of the confu-

sion it would there produce ; and still the omission produces confusion : it is but the choice of the lesser evil. Thus, in forming from *fame*, *shade*, *late*, *mode*, the words *famous*, *shady*, *latish*, *modish*, dismissing the *e*, which should indicate the length of the preceding vowels, we leave nothing to show their superior length to that of the same vowels, represented by the same characters, in the words *famine*, *shadow*, *Latin*, *model*.

Fourthly, we find an anomaly perhaps not less unreasonable, a silent consonant-character indicating the length of a preceding vowel ; as in *climb*, *comb*, *half*, *talk*, *night*, *resign*. The latter of the two concluding consonants in the two first words, and the former in all the others, wholly unpronounced as consonants, perform the office, useful to those acquainted with it, of indicating that the preceding vowel is long. The duplication of a consonant sometimes does the same business, as in *tall*, *fall*, *roll*, *grass*, *cross*, *loss*.

But, unfortunately, there is too little certainty in these indications. Useful as the most anomalous of them might be, were its powers clearly defined, perverse custom has made that which is the most completely founded in reason and analogy, sometimes fallacious. Even the doubled vowel-letter too often represents a short vowel-sound, as in *took*, *book*, *stood*, *flood*. The less rational indications of course will not be found more trustworthy, the silent *g* alone excepted, which, where-



ever it is established by antient custom in our orthography, indicates length in the preceding vowel.<sup>g</sup>

But even this is not the most perplexing irregularity in our orthography, for those who would speak intelligibly of that important constituent of harmony in speech, the quantity of syllables. In other languages, generally, the vowel-character, representing indifferently a long or a short sound, represents yet the same sound, long or short. A contrary method is peculiar to English orthography. With us, the same vowel-sound, long and short, is rarely represented by the same character; but, on the contrary, according to the general rules of our orthography, each character represents the long sound of one vowel, and the short sound of another. This really odd anomaly, through its familiarity, is apt to pass unregarded among ourselves; and the more readily, on account of the regularity with which it is conducted; but to all foreigners it is striking, and, in learning our language, not a little perplexing.<sup>h</sup> On every account it will be  
requisite

<sup>g</sup> I know no exception but in the words *cognisance* and *recognisance*, into which the *g* has been absurdly obtruded of late years; those words being derived from the French *connoissance* and *reconnoissance*, or rather from the Norman *conusance*.

<sup>h</sup> It has not escaped the acute observation of Samuel Johnson, who, however, avoiding the trouble of any explanation on the subject, has contented himself with this remark: "That is eminently observable in *i*, which may be likewise remarked in other letters, that the short sound is not the long sound contracted, but a sound wholly different." Grammar prefixed to Johnson's Dictionary.

requisite for our purpose to examine, in some detail, the manner of representing long and short vowel-sounds in English orthography.

1. The first letter of the alphabet, A, as we have already observed, represents, in English orthography, not one, but three different vowel-sounds. It is not, however, the only representative of them all. On the contrary, what we have noticed as its first, its broad or open sound, where it has a LONG quantity, is much more decisively indicated by the diphthongal notations, *au* and *aw*. When we find the letter *a* in the words *all*, *calling*, *fallen*, *alter*, we know that it is to have the long, broad sound, only because the words are familiar to us. In words occurring for the first time, we should not hesitate rather to give it, so combined, the second sound of *a*, and short, as in *callos*, *fallow*, *altitude*, and in the Latin word *alter*. But wherever, in a word not before seen, we found the diphthongal notations *au*, or *aw*, we should give them the first vowel-sound of our list, and that sound long, as what they properly represent.

We find however the same long sound otherwise represented, and in various ways. In some particular combinations it is commonly indicated by the fourth vowel-character; as in *off*, *offer*, *lofty*, *loss*, *lost*, *prosper*, *cloth*, *froth*. In some preterits and participles, it is represented by the diphthongal notation *ou*, or rather by the barbarous combination *ough*, unknown to our Saxon ancestors,

ancestors, and introduced into our orthography by the gross taste of the middle ages. The merit of that notation seems to consist in uniting the anomalies of a silent consonant, a useless aspirate, and a misused diphthongal character; all together, indicating, as in *fought*, *bought*, no more than the simple sound of the first long *a*. In *broad* and *abroad*, the same sound is represented by *oa*, and in *gone*, by *o* alone, with length indicated by the silent final *e*. It will be obvious to the English reader, that if the pronuntiation of all these examples were not familiar to him, the orthography would lead him to a different pronuntiation; whereas were the words written *aufer*, *prausper*, *clauth*, *faut*, *braud*, *gaun*, and so forth, though he had never seen them before, he would not fail to speak them properly. We need not therefore apparently hesitate to reckon the diphthongal notation *au*, the regular representative, in English orthography, of the first long vowel.

The same vowel-sound, with a SHORT quantity, is of very frequent occurrence in English speech, but never represented either by the first vowel-character, or by any of the diphthongal notations. Its regular and almost only representative is the fourth vowel-character, as in *of*, *body*, *folly*, *astonish*, *majority*.

2. The SECOND vowel, the middle *A*, alone has its sound, when long and when short, regularly represented by the same character. In a very few



words only it is represented by any other; when long, by the diphthongal notation *au*, as in *laugh*, *draught*; and when short, by the letter *e* before the consonant *r*, in the single word *merchant*, beside a few proper names, *Derby*, *Hertford*, *Berkshire*, *Berkeley*.<sup>1</sup>

3. The THIRD vowel, the slender or close *A*, when long, is regularly represented by the diphthongal notation *ai*, or *ay*; which never have a diphthongal enunciation, but in the single instance of the affirmative *ay*.

But the protraction of the third vowel is also very frequently indicated by the silent *e* following an intervening consonant; which never happens to the second, and in a single instance only to the first, where it is represented by the fourth vowel-character, in the word *gone*.

Far out of the way of all analogy, then, the long sound of the third vowel is sometimes represented by the diphthongal characters *ea*, *ei*, *ey*, as in *bear*, *heir*, *grey*; and, in two or three familiar words, by *e*, with length indicated by a silent *e* following an intervening *r*, as in *there*, *where*, *ere*.

The exact sound of the third long vowel, the close or slender *A* is never shortened in English pronunciation.

<sup>1</sup> A fashion has been growing to pronounce the word *merchant*, (formerly written as spoken, *marchant*, from the French *marchand*) as if it were written *murchant*. Here, as in some other instances, the corruption of orthography has tended to the corruption of pronunciation.

nuntiation. But the short vowel-sound, regularly represented by the second vowel-character *e*, in *men*, *met*, *merry*, approaches it so nearly, that, with a reserve for nicer discrimination where occasion may be, they may perhaps be most advantageously classed together; so that the sound represented by *e*, in *men*, *met*, *merry*, may be considered as the short sound of the third vowel, which is heard long, under the representation of the letter *a*, in *mane*, *mate*, *Mary*.<sup>k</sup>

The same short sound is too often most anomalously represented by the diphthongal notation *ea*; as in *head*, *bread*, *ready*, *heaven*, *endeavor*.

4. Our orthography possesses a most advantageous and unexceptionable representative of the long sound of the fourth vowel in the duplication of the second vowel-character, found in the words *feet*, *seen*, *feeling*, *needy*, *proceeding*. This however is very far from having obtained the extent of use that it deserves.

In a few words only we find the same long sound represented by the same character single, as in the first syllables of *lever*, *evil*, *Eden*, *Peter*. Practice alone can give us to know that the same character represents another, and a short sound in the first of *ever*, *never*, *level*, *bevil*, *very*.

But

<sup>k</sup> The familiar contraction of the long sound of the third vowel, in the words *said* and *again*, by the pronuntiation *sed* and *agen*, and the extension of the short sound, when, by poetical license, the word *ever* is reduced to one syllable *e'er*, pronounced as *air*, strongly mark their close affinity.

But the just representative of the fourth long vowel-sound, the doubled *e*, is too often superseded by the irregular use of diphthongal characters, utterly uncertain in their indications; as in *tear*, *receive*, *belief*. It will be obvious to the English reader that the orthography of the first of these examples does not inform him either how he is to pronounce, or how to understand the word; there being, in familiar use in the language, two words so written, of very different sound, and very different import. From the context indeed the meaning will, generally, be readily discovered; otherwise it would be necessary to state whether the pronuntiation is intended as *teer*, or as *tair*, and then no ambiguity would remain.

Often also the fourth vowel-sound has length indicated by the silent *e* following an intervening consonant, as in *here*, *convene*, *concede*. This, as we have before remarked, is, in effect, a whimsical kind of diphthongal notation; the second *e* being placed after the consonant, to be pronounced before it. Would the law of orthography allow it its proper place, the sound would have its regular representation, as in *beer*, *seen*, *succeed*.

In a few French words, deficiently naturalized in our language, the third vowel-character, assisted by the silent *e* following an intervening consonant, indicates the fourth long vowel-sound, as in *machine*.

The short sound of the FOURTH vowel is regularly represented by the third character, *I*, as in  
*bid*,



*bld, filling, giddy.* If any ear have been so misled or puzzled by the eye, as to doubt at first, if the vowel in those words be really the fourth of our list contracted, it may receive satisfaction in various ways. Let the voice lengthen the vowel in the words *bid* and *filling*, and the ear will perceive, not the words *bide*, and *filings*, where *i* represents the first diphthong, but precisely the words *bead* and *feeling*. The common contraction of *ee*, in the familiar pronuntiation of the word *been*, will also be a good example. To direct the voice to that contraction, we must write, not *ben*, which would indicate quite another sound, that of the third short vowel, but *bin*.<sup>1</sup> Often, nevertheless, the sound of the fourth short vowel in medial syllables, before a single consonant, and in a situation to be less forcibly offered to the ear (a circumstance to be hereafter more particularly noticed) is represented by the second character *E*, and in the conclusion of words by the superfluous vowel-character *Y*. The words *enemy, remedy*, exhibit, in their first syllable, the third short vowel-sound; in their second and last syllables equally the fourth short vowel-sound. For the vowel-sound

<sup>1</sup> In the Western Provincial dialect the pronuntiation is *ben*; but that is in just analogy with the general pronuntiation of the vowels in that dialect, in which they are not the *a, e, i, o, u*, as in the polite language, but nearly as in the Italian pronuntiation, *ah, ay, ee, o, u*; and such, till of very late years, was the approved pronuntiation of Latin in Winchester College.

sound of the second syllable of those words, the third vowel-character, would be as good a guide as the second. In the words *verily*, *lenity*, we are led by the letter *i*, to precisely the same sound as in the second syllable of the words *enemy*, *remedy*, by the letter *e*.

5. The LONG sound of the FIFTH VOWEL is, with most certainty represented in our orthography by the diphthongal character *oa*, which never has, in polite speech, a diphthongal enunciation.

The combinations, *ou*, sometimes, and *ow*, often, quit their proper diphthongal office to represent the same simple vowel, as in *soul*, *controul*, *low*, *bowl*. The silent *e*, following a consonant, is, by retroactive indication, also among the assistants to mark the length of a preceding *o*, as in *more*, *tone*, *lonely*. In three words only of our language, *door*, *floor*, *moor*, the fifth long vowel-sound is indicated by the doubled letter, which, were analogy regarded, should be its constant representative. Sometimes a single *o* does the office, as in *both*, *post*, *only*.

The SHORT sound of the FIFTH VOWEL is represented only by the fourth character, *o*, which we have observed to be also the only representative of the short sound of the first vowel.

But it is to be observed, that, in English pronunciation, the short sound of the fifth vowel never occurs in a syllable strongly offered to the ear; a circumstance which may come under future notice.

6. The

6. The LONG SOUND of the SIXTH VOWEL, so custom wills, is with most certainty indicated by that duplication which, as we have remarked, ought to represent the fifth long vowel. The fifth vowel-character, *u*, is also among its admitted representatives, and thus we write indifferently *choose* and *chuse*. But the duplication of the fourth character, *oo*, is by far the more certain indicant of the simple vowel-sound; the fifth character, *u*, being more appropriated to the representation of the complex sound of the second diphthong of our catalogue. In a few instances the sixth long vowel is more anomalously represented by a single *o*, followed by a consonant and the retroactive final *e*, as in *move*, *lose*. When the word acquires an additional syllable beginning with a vowel, the *e* is rejected, as in *moving*, *losing*.<sup>m</sup>

The SHORT SOUND of the SIXTH VOWEL, not of very frequent occurrence in our language, is represented, like the long sound, either by the fifth character singly, as in *put*, *full*, *buskel*; or very anomalously by a duplication of the fourth character, as in *good*, *book*, *footing*; or by the diphthongal notation *ou*, as in *could*, *would*.

7. The

<sup>m</sup> Tho our alphabet is more irregular than that of any other European language, yet anomalies and deficiencies analogous to some of its anomalies and deficiencies, are found among the most perfect. We may have occasion hereafter to advert to the mixed and interchanged use of the characters *u* and *o*, in the Greek, Latin, and Italian, and to the analogy between the combinations *oa*, *ao*, and *oo*, in Greek and in English.



7. The seventh vowel has, in English speech, a short quantity only. The fifth vowel-character, *u*, is its general representative, as in *but, dull, rushing, cunning*. But in several instances the office is supplied by the fourth vowel-character *o*; as in *son, mother, coming*; and in others, with wider anomaly, by the same character, with a silent *e* following an intervening consonant; as in *done, love, come*. In this case the *e* has no retroactive power; it represents no sound, and in truth indicates nothing; the sound of the preceding vowel being short, precisely as, where no *e* follows the consonant, in *son, ton*. In too many instances the diphthongal character, *ou*, is the anomalous representative of the same simple short vowel-sound; as in *rough, young, country, journey*, and in a few the doubled *o*, as in *blood, flood*.

This vowel is uttered with less effort of the organs than any other in our pronuntiation. It wants nothing of the protrusion of the lips necessary for the sixth. Commonly represented by the same character, the wide difference in sound and in manner of enunciation, between the sixth and seventh vowels, has too much escaped the notice of our grammarians. The seventh requires an opener mouth, not only than the sixth, but even than the fifth, and in sound it approaches perhaps as nearly to the fifth as to the sixth; whence, apparently, the letter *o* is so often its representative.

Facility of enunciation seems to have recommended

mended this as a substitute occasionally for all the other vowel-sounds; so that, in syllables less strongly offered to the ear, every vowel-character may be found representing it. Before the rough consonant *r*, even in syllables the most forcibly uttered, the second and third characters, *e*, and *i*, are, in a manner, its regular indicants; as in *err*, *defer*, *fir*, *stir*.

Such are the simple vowel-sounds of English speech, and their representatives in English writing. The compound sounds, or DIPHTHONGS, have no variation of quantity, nor, except the second of our list, as already noticed, any variety of representatives. Nevertheless, even in their representation there are uncertainties which must be noticed; for tho, excepting the second, each diphthongal sound knows only one representative character, yet the characters are not confined to the indication of the diphthongal sounds.

1. We have already seen the first diphthongal character, *I*, the regular representative of the fourth short simple vowel-sound. Combined with a following consonant, it generally indicates that sound, as in *pin*, *bit*. An added final *e* bears the retroactive indication of length, and at the same time of change to a very different sound, that of the first diphthong, as in *pine*, *bite*. The same effects precisely are produced by the introduction of *GH*, or of *G* alone, before the consonant. Thus *sign* and *sight*, indicate

dicating exactly the same combinations of sounds, as *sine*, and *sine*, whose articulated consonants are no other than those of *sin* and *sine*; greatly as these differ in vowel, both for articulation and length.

But, in some particular words, even before two or three consonants, under no rule but the law of custom, *i* represents the first diphthongal sound; as in *child*, *wild*, *mildly*, *mindful*, *kindly*. It is however before these consonants only, which, as we shall observe presently, have their peculiar character among consonants.

2. The letter *u*, already mentioned as the most ordinary representative of the second diphthong, we have also seen the ordinary representative of three simple vowels; the seventh, as in *but* and *dull*; the short sixth, as in *put* and *full*; and the long sixth, as in *rue*, *rude*, *ruler*: in *due*, *pupil*, *future*, it represents the second diphthong. Combined with a following consonant in the same syllable, unless where a retroactive *e* is added, it always indicates a short sound; but which of the two short sounds, no rule can tell. When representing a long sound, whether that long sound shall be the simple or the diphthongal, seems to depend on the character of the preceding consonant, a matter which will come shortly under notice. When a preceding consonant forms a part of the syllable, the habit of English speech always prefers the diphthongal enunciation. Nor do these rules differ if, instead of the single letter, a diphthongal character is the indicant.

Thus



Thus *blew* and *blue*, have equally the simple long sound; *dew* and *due*, the diphthongal: *euphony*, *eulogy*, *use*, *unit*, *unite*, *utility*, all equally begin with the diphthong.

3. The noblest diphthong of English pronunciation, the **THIRD**, is unfortunately the rarest; and ill habit, patronized by the poets, to facilitate the production of rime, has gone far toward reducing it, in some familiar words, for careless mouths, to the less open sound of the first; as in *join*, *point*, *appoint*. Still, however, in solemn delivery, the full enunciation of the proper sound is required, and among the best speakers it obtains on all occasions. We may therefore reckon the compound character of the representative of the third diphthong only; and in this simplicity of employment it stands singular among the representatives of vowel-sound in English orthography.

4. The combination *ou*, the only representative of the **FOURTH** diphthong, has already been noticed as the uncertain indicant of other sounds, long and short; nor will anything but use tell where it is in its proper office of representing the diphthong.

The **VARIETIES** of **VOWEL-SOUND** in English speech, we find then really no less than **SEVENTEEN**, strongly distinguished, either by articulation or by quantity; the **LONG** sounds being six simple and four diphthongal, in all **TEN**, and the **SHORT SEVEN**.

We proceed now to consider the **CONSONANTS**, of which, however, fortunately our subject will require far less length and intricacy of examination.

Incapable of any clear articulation by themselves, and therefore contributing neither sonorousness nor sweetness to language, **CONSONANTS** are nevertheless of great, and perhaps essential importance, through their power of separating the flowing sounds of vowels, by strong boundaries, obvious to the ear; of adding force and expression, and of furnishing means for useful varieties and pleasing contrast. It is in their office of separating vowels, principally, that the consonants will require our consideration here.

**CONSONANTS** are divided by grammarians, according to the organs of utterance which give them their several characters, into Labials, Dentals, Palatals, and Nasals; to which, in some languages, are added Gutturals, to English pronuntiation happily unknown. Consonants are otherwise divided under two heads, whose distinctions are more important for our present purpose, **SEMIVOWELS**, and **MUTES**; so called, the former because capable of an obscure articulation without any accompanying vowel; the latter, because, unassociated with a vowel, they cannot be articulated at all. In our alphabet these two kinds of consonants are commodiously distinguished by their names; those of the mutes beginning with the consonant whose  
name

name is to be expressed, and ending with a vowel; those of the semivowels (V and J excepted) beginning with a vowel and ending with the consonant. Four of the semivowels then, L, M, N, R, on account of their faculty of coalescing in articulation with other consonants, are further distinguished by the name of LIQUIDS; and three of the mutes, K, P, T, capable of no other sound from the most forced vociferation than from a whisper, are distinguished as PURE MUTES, from the others, which are called IMPURE OR SEMIMUTES.

Consonant-sounds, produced, not as vowel-sounds, by modulation of the breath among the organs of speech, but by some determinate action of those organs, bringing them together, or separating them, have their several characters marked by more obvious boundaries; and being less liable to be mistaken, are also less liable to be misrepresented. Nevertheless irregularities in the representation of consonant-sounds are found. Those in English orthography, principally requiring notice here, are these:

First, the employment of consonant-characters to denote vowel-sound; of which mention has been made in treating of vowels: Secondly, the association of a vowel-character with a consonant-character, to denote a consonant-sound different from that which the consonant-character alone would indicate; of which the word *association* affords two examples, in the *ci* and in the *ti*: Thirdly,



the intrusion of a consonant-character indicating no sound; as in *debt*, *receipt*, *foreign*, *ought*, *bough*, *island*; where the *b*, *p*, *g*, *gh*, and *s* are perfectly silent: Fourthly, the employment of some characters, *c*, *g*, *s*, *t*, to indicate, on different occasions, two different sounds; as in *cease* and *case*, *giant* and *giddy*, *rise* the noun, and *rise* the verb, *acting* and *action*: Fifthly, the employment of different characters, *c* and *k*, *c* and *s* and *t*, *s* and *z*, to denote the same sound: Sixthly, the employment of compound characters, *ch*, *tch*, *gh*, *ph*, *sh*, *th*, *dg*, *ng*, to represent simple consonant-sounds.

There is yet a sound in our language, requiring notice, tho wholly unrepresented in our modern orthography. Nearly resembling that half-articulate vowel, which the French call their feminine *ε*, it is, in our speech, an appendage only of mute consonants, so obscure that it has gone generally unobserved. Now such is the nature of the mute consonants, that articulation cannot stop with them. In speaking the words *rob*, *neck*, *bad*, *big*, *look*, *sup*, *not*, no voice can make them perfect monosyllables: the louder sound indeed ceases with the stroke of the organs producing the final consonant, and the syllable is there completed; but articulation, in spite of effort to stop it, will follow, making an imperfect second syllable, in a whisper. If the whole word be whispered, this involuntary second syllable, tho of no very clear articulation, will be as clearly perceptible by the ear as the first.

Hence

Hence our forefathers wrote *robbe*, *rocke*, and so forth: and perhaps modern criticism has been sometimes a little rash in animadversion upon defects in their versification, imagined only in the want of due attention to the necessary existence of a syllable, which they may have pronounced fuller than modern custom would warrant.

In the view here taken of the representatives of sounds in English speech, some anomalies, found only in one or two words, are unnoticed; and especially those Gallicisms with which the depraved fashion of the present day is adding to our language deformities not yet become completely constitutional. Without them we have already, I fear, more than enough to justify the observation of the Italian, Barretti, in his English grammar prefixed to his dictionary: ‘And here,’ he says, ‘is the explanation of the English alphabet completed; which, I hope, will not frighten the Italian reader, tho it presents to his view, I must confess, a craggy mountain, of most difficult ascent.’<sup>n</sup>

\* Ed ecco la spiegazione dell’ alfabeto (Inglese) finita; che, spero, non ispaventerà il leggitore Italiano, quantunque presenti a suoi occhi, dirò così, una montagna scabra, e di malagevolissima salita.

## SECTION III.

Of Quantity, or Mensuration of the Time of Sounds, in English Speech.

THE foregoing survey of the elements, however tiresome, appeared preparation indispensable for treating intelligibly the subject proposed. In proceeding, it may still be necessary, tho it is hoped no longer in equal degree, to bespeak the reader's patience.

From the elements we advance to the integrals of speech, the lowest order of which, as already defined, is that called a syllable.

HARMONY in language then, being, in our definition, the result of a happy combination of measure and melody; MEASURE, meaning mensuration of time, made sensible to the ear in the flow of speech; and MELODY, a pleasing succession of varying tones exhibited in the flow of speech, to become acquainted with the mechanism of that harmony, we must observe how measures and tones exist and vary in the lowest order of the integrals of speech, syllables.

A vowel, pronounced alone, is at the same time an element and an integral; and, tho not within the etymological import of the word syllable, is completely of the order of things indicated by that name.

Without a vowel can be no syllable; and two  
vowels



vowels cannot coëxist in a syllable, unless combined in a diphthongal sound. Wherever two vowels are separately heard, there are two syllables.

But the association of a vowel or diphthong with one consonant, or with more consonants, to any number that the voice may combine in articulation with one vowel, will form but one syllable: accumulation, or ill combination of consonants, may produce cacophony and indistinctness; but, till a second vowel is heard, there can be no second syllable.

But vowels, singly constituting syllables, are capable of all varieties of time or quantity, from the meereft point of sound, to any length to which the speaker's breath can hold; and their sounds may be so melted by the voice into each other, that, not only the differences of their quantities, but the limits of their several sounds may be hardly, or not at all, perceptible.

These inconveniences, in the combination of vowel-sounds, are remedied by the introduction of consonants. Produced by a kind of stroke of the organs of speech, the effect of consonants on the ear is quick and decisive. Incapable of lengthened sound, the mutes wholly, the semivowels with any advantageous result, they unite, instantaneously on utterance, with a following vowel, or instantaneously stop the sound of a preceding vowel, and in the same instant cease themselves. The time,

or quantity, of a syllable then depends principally upon its vowel; but is most readily ascertained, when the limits are marked by the stroke of the organs which produces a consonant. For illustration therefore of the length of vowels, hitherto, syllables have generally been chosen whose vowel is followed by a consonant, either within the same, or, which equally answers the purpose, beginning a succeeding syllable.

With such syllables for examples, we have seen that, among the vowel-sounds of English speech, two measures of time or quantity, strongly distinguished from each other, are found among circumstances essential to the language. Of the seven simple vowel-sounds, six have, on some occasions, a longer, on others, a shorter enunciation, so that the long is about double in time, or quantity, to the short; the seventh has the short only, and the four diphthongs only the long quantity.

Such syllables then, wherever we find them, with such differences, obvious to the ear in ordinary English speech, as in the examples cited, will be commodious standards of quantity, by which to measure the length of syllables otherwise composed. Our first rule of quantity then may stand thus:  
 A SYLLABLE WITH A SHORT VOWEL, FOLLOWED BY A SINGLE CONSONANT, HAS THE JUST MEASURE OF A SHORT SYLLABLE; as the first of *fathom*: A SYLLABLE WITH A LONG VOWEL FOLLOWED BY A SINGLE CONSONANT HAS DOUBLE  
 THE

THE TIME OF THE SHORT SYLLABLE, AND FILLS THE JUST MEASURE OF A LONG SYLLABLE; as the first of *father*.

If sound be added to a given sound, the TIME of utterance, or the QUANTITY, must necessarily be increased. A syllable, therefore, with a consonant before as well as after its vowel, must be longer than a syllable composed of the same elements, with the omission of the first consonant. Thus, if the syllable *or* has the just measure of a short quantity, the syllable *for* should have more than the just measure of a short quantity. It is however not what may be discovered by analysis and studied comparison, but what is striking to a good ear, in the flow of speech, that makes a difference essential to harmony. The time of a consonant, preceding a vowel within the same syllable, tho unquestionably a particle of quantity, is too much of a point, to be taken into any account of rhythmical measure in the flow of language, by the most scrupulous ear.\*

Not so when two consonants meet. Of these each must have its own action of the organs; which must be either separated, or closed, or both, for the distinct articulation of each. Thus an interval necessarily has place, with a delay of enunciation, not minute, and evading observation,

\* The classical reader, who has given any attention to these matters, will recollect the observation of Dionysius of Halicarnassus on the words ὕδος, ῥόδος, σέφος.

but



but large and striking to the ear. Let the words *banish*, ~~*baron*~~, *venom*, *living*, *body*, *punish*, be compared with ~~*banter*~~, ~~*barter*~~, *vender*, *lifting*, *bodkin*, *pungent*; the first syllables in each set are the same, but the difference of time necessarily employed by the voice, before it can give the second syllable to the ear, is striking. The first syllables are not of themselves long, in the second set of examples more than in the first set; but the two consonants requiring separate articulation, the voice is necessarily delayed by the double operation; and before the second syllable can be heard, a time elapses equal to what would be requisite for the pronuntiation of a long vowel instead of the short one, provided only a single consonant followed. Let the words *farther*, *lifting*, *order*, *godly*, *fulsome*, be compared with *father*, *leaving*, *author*, *gaudy*, *foolish*, and the ear will not readily decide of the first syllables which are the longer. Those of the former set, of themselves short, are made long, in the composition of speech; employing double time and therefore rhythmically long; not by increase of vowel-sound, but by duplication of consonant-sound.<sup>p</sup>

It is obvious that if two consonants follow a long vowel, not an uncommon circumstance in English pronuntiation, as in *alter*, *needleless*, *bolder*, the

<sup>p</sup> The classical reader may find, in the observation of this simple difference, full explanation of some passages among the antient writers, Cicero particularly, which appear to have puzzled some of the most learned among the moderns.

measure will be beyond the standard of a long quantity. But the proportionate increase is not the same after a long vowel, as after a short vowel; the quantity is not doubled, in the former as in the latter case; and the difference has been found such as not to require, for rhythmical purposes, a new denomination of measure.

An exception, however, to the rule of doubled consonants will require notice: A liquid, following a mute, may be so combined with it in pronuntiation as scarcely to delay the voice more than a single consonant. In the words *reply*, *reprefs*, the consonants *pl* and *pr*, unconnected with the first syllable, mix wholly with the second; so that the first, having a short vowel, has a short quantity. But the voice, with the power of combining, has also the power of separating them. In the proper names *Ripley*, *Mapley*, the *p* is pronounced with the first syllable, the *l* with the second; and through this separation of the two consonants, the voice is necessarily retarded, as in the pronuntiation of any other two consonants; so that, tho' the vowel of the first syllable be short, the rhythmical measure is long.

More than one consonant cannot precede a vowel within the same syllable, unless so assorted that they may pass rapidly over the tongue, as if by a single effort. The consonant *f* is singular in being capable of articulation before any other consonant, and alone can be pronounced before two others.

A syl-

A syllable whose vowel is followed by a vowel, has, in English speech, never more than the short quantity. Even of the diphthongs, the third only has necessary extension of sound sufficient, without the support of a following consonant, to make a long syllable. Its superiority will be obvious to the ear in a comparison of the words *dial*, *dual*, *fewer*, *vowel*, *royal*, *joyous*: the first syllable of the two last words only is long.

We have now, I think, gone through all the observation necessary toward a general arrangement of the syllables of English speech, under the two heads of short and long; provided we avoid the error of some very learned writers upon the subject, who have allowed the eye so to impose upon the ear, that they have estimated the silent written character as a real spoken element. To guard therefore against such error, it may be proper to advert to some peculiarities and irregularities in our written representation of language, which have not yet come under notice.

We have seen that two consonants, excepting often when the second is a liquid, make the syllable, formed with the preceding vowel, long. But it must be observed that the ITERATION of a CONSONANT-CHARACTER, in English orthography, generally indicates no addition, no alteration, of consonant-sound. In the words *manor* and *manner*, *very* and *merry*, *literal* and *littering*, *consider* and *forbidder*, *comet* and *common*, *study* and *ruddy*, the  
single



single and the doubled letters indicate exactly the same single sound.

Nevertheless, the duplication is not idle. Its indications indeed are wide of all analogy in orthography, and little consistent even among themselves ; but they are important.

For, as a general rule, the duplication of a consonant-character indicates that the preceding vowel is short. When we see the words *baron*, *canon*, *venom*, *critic*, *colic*, *punish*, it is from use only we know that the first syllables are all to be pronounced short ; for analogy, such as our orthography possesses, would rather intimate the vowels, and of course the syllables, to be long ; as in *vary*, *caning*, *venal*, *vital*, *solar*, *puny*, *tuning*. But the duplication of the consonant-character marks the short sound decisively for all versed in English spelling ; as in *barren*, *cannon*, *berry*, *bitter*, *follow*, *running*.

In direct contradiction however to this rule, the duplication of the consonant-characters *l* and *s*, sometimes indicates, as we have already observed in treating of the alphabet, that the preceding vowel is long ; as in *call*, *toll*, *pass*, *falling*, *tossing*, *crossing*, *amassing*.

It seems to have been the habit of deference to written language, and a comparative disregard of the spoken, that have led some very learned English writers to attribute the effect of two consonant-sounds to the English pronuntiation of a doubled consonant-character. A very small acquaintance  
with

with Italian pronuntiation, which always gives the double sound for the doubled character, would have guarded against the error.<sup>1</sup> But we have, within our own language, circumstances exactly coinciding with the Italian practice, and which, as exceptions, will assist to illustrate that general rule of our orthography, that a doubled consonant-character is not pronounced as two, but as a single letter.

The most frequent exception to that rule is, where the same consonant-character which ends one word, begins the next; as in *learned dulness*, *common notions*. Characters so iterated are not pronounced, as in the middle of words, as one letter, but each has its distinct articulation. The difference will be evident in a comparison of the phrases *red deer*, *black cur*, *black cat*, (the *ck* indicating no more sound than either letter alone) with the words *redder* and *blacker*, and the family name *Blacket*.

A second exception occurs wherever, in words

<sup>1</sup> The French orthography, generally differing enough from ours, agrees with it in regard to the indication of doubled consonants: 'Un regle general, and qui ne souffre point d'exception, c'est que toute syllabe, qui finit par une consonne, suivie d'une autre, est longue; mais en Français, au contraire, le redoublement de la consonne presque toujours avertit que la syllabe est breve.' The reason of the rule is, that, in French, the second consonant-character is not pronounced, as in Italian, but silent, as in English, with the same retroactive indication for the measure of the preceding vowel as in English.

compounded with the negative particle *un*, an *n* follows ; as in *unnumbered*, *unnecessary*, *unnamed*. Each *n* is distinctly articulated (the words indeed would otherwise be scarcely understood) and the first syllable of those words of course is long. Careful delivery will equally distinguish the two letters, where words derived from the Latin have the negative particle *in* followed by an *n*, and equally where *l*, or *r*, substituted for *n*, are followed by *l* and *r* ; provided the affirmative word be also adopted into our language ; as in *innumerable*, *illegitimate*, *irresolute*, *irrevocable*, in which the opposition is to be marked to *numerable*, *legitimate*, *resolute*, *revocable*. But where the affirmative word has not been received into our language, and that which, in its original language, was of a negative form, indicates in ours something positive, without particular negation implied, as in *innocent*, the reason for the double consonant-sound not existing, the practice of pronuntiation for such words has yielded to the general bent of the language, and only a single consonant is spoken.

A third exception is found in some few other words, as in *wholly*, formerly written *wholely* ; which, were the iterated character not iterated in pronuntiation, would be undistinguishable from the very different word *holy*.

Among those irregularities which our alphabet has in common with many others, it happens that some of our consonant-characters represent each

two



two very different consonant-sounds. Wherever then such a character is so iterated as to indicate two different sounds, there are really two different consonants, and the syllable formed with the preceding vowel will have a long quantity; as in the words *accent*, *accident*, *accede*.

On the contrary, where different characters, representing the same consonant-sound, meet in one word, the indication is no other than if the more regular representative of the sound were doubled; as in *ascend*, *descend*, *ascertain*. *Sc* being here pronounced as if *fs* were written, and a single *s* only being articulated, the first syllable of those words, having a short vowel, has a short quantity.

Among the peculiarities of our orthography then it must be observed, that the characters *ng* are often combined to represent a sound differing from any represented by a single character, yet still not a double, but a single consonant-sound; and nevertheless those characters also often meet, each bearing its distinct sound. In the former case, if the vowel preceding the two consonant-characters be short, the syllable formed with it will be short; as in *hang*, *sing*, *long*, *hanger*, *singer*, *longing*. In the latter case the syllable formed with the preceding vowel must be long, because two consonants are separately pronounced after it; as in *longer*, *strongest*, *anger*, *linger*, *hunger*, where the *g* has its hard sound, and equally in *avenger*, *engine*, *tinging*, *longitude*, *pungent*, where it has its soft sound.

The

The combinations *ch* and *sh*, are representatives of single consonant-sounds, which, as well as the single sound of *ng*, were our alphabet perfect, should have their peculiar representative characters. The combination *tch* is in effect double *ch*, and the combinations *dg* and *dj*, are in effect double soft *g* and double *j*. Like other doubled consonant-characters, they indicate generally that the preceding vowel is short, and bear, no more than others, any doubled consonant-sound. Of course the syllable formed with the preceding vowel is generally short; as we find in *matching*, *fatchel*, *adjective*, *hedges*, *ridges*, *abridging*, *lodging*, *cudgel*; whereas where the duplication is not found, as in the proper names *Ajax* and *Rachel*, and the words *regent*, *obliging*, *cogent*, the vowel, and of course the syllable, with exceptions that may mostly be brought under rule, is long.

Most of the syllables hitherto selected for examples of quantity have been such as are marked in pronuntiation by the most distinguishing accent of the word. The reason for this choice, together with the application of the rules to other syllables, will be more conveniently explained after we have adverted to the nature of accent and emphasis in English speech. For the present our remarks upon quantity may be concluded here with summing up its rules thus:

1. Every syllable with a long vowel or a diphthong, followed, whether within the same, or in

the next syllable, by a consonant, has a long quantity.

2. Every syllable with a short vowel, followed by the distinct articulation of two consonants, has a long quantity.

3. Every syllable with a short vowel, followed by only one articulated consonant, has only a short quantity.

4. Every syllable with any vowel, or with the first, second, or fourth diphthong, followed by a vowel or diphthong, has only a short quantity; except in some cases where monosyllables are lengthened by the power, hereafter to be noticed, of emphasis.



## SECTION IV.

Of Tones or Accents, and Emphasis in English Speech, and of their connection with the Time or Quantity of Syllables.

IF I have been fortunate enough to lead my reader through all my detail of explanation thus far, not overwearied or disgusted, I shall hope that much of the intricacy, whence hath arisen disagreement among modern writers on the harmony of language and the mechanism of verse, is unfolded for him, and that, the perplexity, likely to be the most copious source of disgust, being removed, the way is advantageously prepared for proceeding to a remaining part of the subject, of much importance and of no little nicety, the TONES of speech.

That, in every syllable, of every language, some TONE, ACCENT, or PITCH of the voice, must accompany articulation, is as evidently of natural necessity, as that some portion of time must be employed in it.

It is abundantly obvious then, that in the English language, every word, not monosyllabical, has one syllable always made eminent by a distinguishing tone, or accent. This syllable is often called the ACCENTED SYLLABLE, and its tone THE ACCENT, and the other syllables, in contra-

distinction, are called UNACCENTED ; a mode of speaking which, if it have any occasional convenience, may perhaps be allowed, provided it be always remembered that the terms are so used, by a licence of speech, to signify the more and the less eminent accentuation ; accent, or tone, being that, some mode and degree of which must always coëxist, that is, must always be among the impressions made by the voice upon the ear, with every syllable uttered.

Among foreign modern languages, the general character of the accentuation in the Italian, the Spanish, and the modern Greek, is the same as in the English. In all these, and I believe I might add the Portuguese, the German, and those of the same origin with the German, one syllable of every two or more in one word, is made eminent by its tone. We are well assured that, so far at least, the accentuation of the antient Greek and Latin, which will come under more particular observation hereafter, agreed with that of these modern speeches. It may be important then to observe, on account of the more extensive familiarity with the French than with any other foreign speech, in our own country, and still much more throughout the rest of northern Europe, that the French language differs in this from all others of which I have any knowledge. The French grammarians and critics universally hold that no syllable

ble of any word in their language is intitled to any characteristical accent. A consequence, obvious to those who have had any opportunity for observation, is, that the accentuation of all the other European languages has peculiar difficulties for the French people. That of our own, in particular, little among the difficulties for an Italian learning our speech, is to a Frenchman, after boyhood, unattainable. The French are, beyond all other foreigners, distinguished among us by what is commonly called, and properly enough, a foreign accent.\*

What then are the characteristical qualities of that accent which gives eminence to one syllable in every polysyllabical word of the English language, is a question which will require consideration. On first view it may seem that the answer should be readily suggested by the ear: and it may appear strange that opinions very wide of one another have been held by very learned and able men, on a matter so open to the observation of every day and almost every moment. Still more strange however surely must seem the question, What is the difference between the accent, tone, or pitch of the voice, used in uttering a syllable, and the quantity, or time employed in uttering it? or are they not the same thing? or if not absolutely

\* This is among subjects, which may occur for farther explanation on future opportunity.



the same thing, are they not so blended and confounded in the nature of modern speech, that to distinguish them is no longer possible? Yet these are questions which have agitated and disturbed the republic of letters for centuries. But upon just investigation, it will be found that the parts concurring to constitute that small, and, it might seem, simple thing a syllable, are so many, so different, so minute, and so implicated, that, when fairly exhibited, it may not perhaps appear wonderful if the critics and disputants have, some, overlooked, and, others, avoided, the labor necessary to such an analysis, as alone could obviate mistake about them in their compound form.

A sense of deficient comprehension of what remains to us from various antient writers of the highest estimation, concerning the harmony and the mechanism of verse in the Greek and Latin languages, has led many among the modern learned to suppose that the antients, and especially the Greeks, had organs of speech and hearing much more delicate and discerning than men are now commonly endowed with. From the extant writings of the antients however it may be gathered, that their superiority has been less a gift of nature, than an acquisition of study and practice. In a discourse on music by Plutarch, who wrote when the doctrine of the harmony of his language, cultivated for many centuries, was taught as a part  
of

of grammar, among the early businessses of education, we find the following passage: ‘Three very ‘minute things,’ he says, ‘always necessarily ‘affect the hearing at once, TONE, TIME, and ‘SYLLABLE OR LETTER.’ (By syllable or letter he means the articulation of the elements, considered separately from the tone and the time.) ‘From the march of the tone the melody is discovered; from that of the time, the cadence; from ‘that of the letter or syllable, the words. Always ‘proceeding together, their impulse upon the ear ‘is simultaneous. But it is evident that those ‘whose hearing is not clear and quick enough to ‘distinguish them, so as to have a separate perception of each, cannot possibly follow them ‘critically, and judge how far each is expressed, ‘ill or well.’

Yet all that contributes to perplexity in the sound of syllables, is not, even in this passage, unfolded. To make the analysis complete, of the three very minute things, mentioned by Plutarch, two must be subdivided. For, tho TIME

‘Αἰεὶ γὰρ ἀναγκαῖον τρεῖς ἐλάχιστα εἶναι τὰ πίπτοντα ἅμα εἰς τὴν ἀκοήν, φθόγγον τε καὶ χρόνον καὶ συλλαβὴν ἢ γράμμα. Συμβήσεται δὲ ἐκ τῆς μὲν κατὰ φθόγγον πορείας τὸ ἡρμοσμένον γνωρίζεσθαι, ἐκ δὲ τῆς κατὰ χρόνον τὸν ῥυθμόν, ἐκ δὲ τῆς κατὰ γράμμα ἢ συλλαβὴν τὸ λεγόμενον. Ὁμοῦ δὲ προβαίνειν, ἅμα τὴν τῆς αἰδέσεως ἐπιφορὰν ἀναγκαῖον ποιεῖσθαι. Ἀλλὰ μὴ καὶ κεῖνο φανερὸν, ὅτι οὐκ ἐνδέχεται, μὴ δυναμένης τῆς αἰσθήσεως χωρίζειν ἕκαστον τῶν εἰρημένων, παρακολουθεῖν τε δύνασθαι τοῖς καθ’ ἕκαστα, καὶ συνορᾶν τὸ θ’ ἀμαρτανόμενον ἐν ἑκάστῳ αὐτῶν καὶ τὸ μὴ. Plut. de Musica, p. 1144. ed. Paris. 1624.

admits no variety but of length, TONES may differ either in pitch, or in force, and SYLLABLES, in all the ways in which elements may be combined to form them. In every syllable therefore at once are offered to the ear, for its perception and judgement, the quantity of time, the pitch of tone, and the force of tone, together with the articulation of the elements, which last is ever and infinitely varying. Now for the ear to separate all these things, which impress it always together, so that the mind may form a distinct judgement of each, will obviously require some attention.

To proceed then with the consideration of the first of Plutarch's three things, Tone, or Accent. The superior force of utterance, and consequent loudness, by which one syllable of two or more in one word, in English, and the other modern European languages, French excepted,<sup>\*</sup> is made eminent, can escape no ear practised in those languages. The greater part of English writers, on the subject, have considered the eminent syllable in English speech as principally distinguished by acuteness of tone. But some have held this to be a prejudice of learning, accustomed to defer to Greek and Latin authority; the distinguishing

<sup>\*</sup> It is not meant that no syllable, in French polysyllabical words, is ever, in proper French pronounciation, made eminent by force of utterance; but only that no one syllable is, in French, as in the other European languages, regularly and constantly intitled to such preëminence.



accent of English speech being characterized by loudness only. The question is not unimportant, at least to the just reputation of the language; for the variation of force in speech might suffice for expression, which however may be doubted, yet variation of tone is essential toward adding the grace of melody.

To decide this question, as the ear only can be the judge, not only we must dismiss prejudice, but it will be advantageous to relieve the ear, as far as may be, from whatever, in experiment, may perplex it. In a polysyllabical word, each syllable of which is composed of different elements, and especially if with different vowels, some necessarily to be spoken with an opener, and some with a closer mouth, the ear is liable to be disturbed in its judgement of the tone, or pitch of the voice, by the varieties in the articulation of the elements. For easy and sure decision therefore, a word should be found, or, in the want of such, feigned, composed of syllables, such as are commonly used in what is called humming a tune, without variety of vowel-sound. Let then the second vowel of our catalogue, the middle *a*, be taken, with any consonant after it, to form a syllable, and let it be repeated thrice, to form a trissyllabical word, as *ALALAL*. Let this be spoken as an English word, with the strong accent on either syllable, or, on each, in repeating the word; and, no change of articulation disturbing  
the

the ear, it will be abundantly evident that, with ordinary English pronuntiation, the STRENGTHENED SYLLABLE has always the ACUTER TONE, or, in musical phrase, the higher note.

But tho this is so in proper English pronuntiation, it is not so in all pronuntiation of the English language; and the exceptions will illustrate the rule. It is the striking peculiarity of the Scottish dialect of the English language, unknown, as far as I have had opportunity to observe, in any dialect of any other language, that the distinguishing accent of its words is a proper grave; a lower note than is given to any other syllable of the word. In that dialect, if the penultimate be the strengthened syllable, the concluding syllable rises in tone considerably, so that the word ends with something approaching to a squeak. To those who, themselves speaking proper English, have had opportunity to observe the Lowland Scottish pronuntiation, this strong peculiarity cannot fail to have been striking.

The difference, indeed, of the accentuation of the polite English, and of all the southern provincial English, from that of the Scottish, with which the northern English, to a great extent, is congenial, requires no nice ear, or close observation to discern. It is, on the contrary, so wide, that almost any voice may take a mean between the two, through which the nature of each may be still more strongly illustrated. After pronouncing

nouncing either the fictitious, or any real word, with the English and Scottish accentuation successively, the same word may be spoken without any variation of note, or pitch of the voice, but with one syllable of the three, for example the second, strengthened and made louder than the others. Such pronuntiation will be a kind of half animated droning, destitute equally of the English and of the Scottish character, and wide of all probable character of real language; like the sound of a pipe, varied by stronger and weaker inflation, without any alteration of stop. Such monotony may have been observed among children learning to read; more tolerable than the completer monotony, also to be heard among learners, where no variation is made even of loudness, but still utterly unsatisfactory in reading, and, in speaking, never heard.

The account given by one of the earliest and most learned writers on English grammar, Doctor John Wallis, of the actions of the organs, which severally produce loudness of sound and variation of tone in the human voice, may here deserve notice. ‘The breath,’ he says, ‘which  
‘is as the material of speech, passes by the throat;  
‘and from its various collision with the parts  
‘about the mouth, arises all the variety of sounds  
‘of the voice, both in tone and in articulation.  
‘Of this variety, however, nothing is produced  
‘by the lungs; which operate only to the extru-  
‘sion



‘ sion of the breath with greater or less force ;  
 ‘ whence, other things equal, the voice becomes  
 ‘ louder or softer ; the lungs having, in speech,  
 ‘ precisely the effect of the bellows in an organ.

‘ The variety of tones, higher and lower, is  
 ‘ produced, in some degree, by the trachea, or  
 ‘ pipe, but more by the larynx, or knot of the  
 ‘ throat. Where the pipe is narrower, the sound  
 ‘ will be sharper ; where wider, it will be deeper ;  
 ‘ and thence the different pitch of voice of dif-  
 ‘ ferent persons, and of the same person at different  
 ‘ ages. But the seat of all the musical modula-  
 ‘ tion of the voice is in the larynx, adapted to  
 ‘ enlarge or lessen the upper aperture of the throat,  
 ‘ and so to make the tone of the same voice  
 ‘ sharper or deeper.

‘ From different affection of the same parts,  
 ‘ arises the difference of whispering and speaking-  
 ‘ out. With greater force of utterance, the ten-  
 ‘ sion of the trachea and larynx becomes greater,  
 ‘ at the same time that the concussion from the  
 ‘ lungs is greater, whence arises the vibration  
 ‘ which produces open speech. With smaller  
 ‘ force of breath, and less tension of parts, the  
 ‘ articulation passes in a whisper.’

Wallis wrote in Latin, which I have endeavoured to translate here with scrupulous exactness. His observations will have the more authority, because he was much versed in experimental philosophy. But any person, making experiment  
 with

with his own voice, will be more readily sensible of the operation of the tongue, jaws and lips, than of what passes so far within the mouth as the larynx; and it will be obvious that, in the utterance of deep tones, the sound seems to issue from the throat, passing through a hollow mouth, with the tongue kept down; but that, in the utterance of high, or sharp tones, the hollow of the mouth is considerably lessened, by the raising of the tongue, and the sound seems produced between the tongue and the palate: in the highest tones the roof of the mouth is most affected by the stroke of the voice, which seems even to approach the nose."

Now if any polysyllable be spoken monotonously, strengthening only one syllable, our fictitious word in preference for example, the more forcible extrusion of the breath, in speaking the louder syllable, will be felt only as producing a stronger vibration in the same parts in which the utterance of the other syllables produced a weaker. But such monotonous pronuntiation will most evidently

" In a learned and ingenious, and generally very judicious, little treatise, on the Art of delivering written language, published by Doddsley in the year 1775, the author unnamed, it is contended that the pitch of the voice is in no degree modulated in the mouth; the aperture being supposed too large, in comparison with that of the throat, to have any other than the effect of the bell of a wind-instrument. It appears to me that the power of the tongue to vary the hollow of the mouth, has not been there sufficiently considered.

not

not be properly English. To produce the proper English intonation, the tongue must be raised in pronouncing the strengthened syllable; the vibration will be felt more about the palate, and the tone will be acuter; it will be a higher note. To produce the Scottish intonation, on the contrary, the tongue, in uttering the same syllable, must be lowered; the concussion will operate nearer the larynx, and the tone will be graver than that of the other syllables; it will be a lower note.

But to give eminence to any accent, a strengthened enunciation is necessary. It is force of utterance that gives eminence equally to the acute in English pronuntiation, and to the grave in Scottish.

Thus I trust it has been shown that the eminent accent of words, in English speech, with superior force, has also, by the indispensable law of that speech, a higher tone, and is, what it has been most commonly called, an ACUTE ACCENT. Without variety of tone, or, in musical phrase, without various notes, tho there might be rhythmus and measure, there could be no melody in speech. I have therefore been anxious to show the existence of such variety in English speech, by argument and example, tho perhaps for most readers superfluous. To reduce the practice to their theory, the theory of but few indeed, but of some whom I respect, who have held the eminent accent of English words to derive its character



character from force of utterance only, would be infinitely injurious to the language.

But it will be obvious to all acquainted with English speech, that the longer polysyllables have more than one distinguishing accent. One indeed is always predominant; superior in force, higher in tone: it is properly called, by way of eminence, the acute accent, or even simply the accent. By its situation in the word, the situation and the comparative eminence of inferior accents is directed. In trissyllables, if the middle syllable be acuted, neither of the others has a distinguished character: they will be equally grave, or what is often called unaccented. But if the first have the acute, the third will be more distinguished by accent than the second; it will be louder and sharper; as in *énerg'y, confidènt*. If the last have the acute, the first will be more distinguished by accent than the second; as in *refugée, confidánt*. In both cases the middle syllable will have the lowest tone, as well as the least forcible tone. In words of four syllables there will still be but two of distinguished accent, as otherwise two acutes would meet in one word; which the genius of English pronunciation refuses. Under this restriction, words of five syllables may have three, or only two distinguishing accents, and words of multiplied syllables more in proportion.

But we have not yet gone through the whole  
complication

complication of circumstances in speech, whence, through want, apparently, of sufficient patience in analysis, controversy hath arisen. EMPHASIS remains to be considered; a matter of great importance to the harmony of language as well as to the import; intimately implicated always with accent, and, in English speech, sometimes with quantity.

The word EMPHASIS, etymologically considered, means SHOWING, POINTING-OUT FOR OBSERVATION. As applied to speech, it means marking by the voice any word in a phrase or sentence as more important than the rest.

The purpose of Emphasis may be effected in several ways; by increase of force, by variation of tone, by extension of time in enunciation, or by any two or all of these together. In the first way Emphasis operates by simple vociferation; in the second, by Accent; in the third, by Quantity.

The offices of Emphasis and of Accent have a near analogy; that of the former being to mark for notice, and raise to eminence, words in sentences, that of the latter, syllables in words. Their purposes being thus analagous, similar means serve in a great degree for each, but they have very material differences. Accent is allotted to its syllable by law of custom only, without rule of reason; and there remains immoveable: Emphasis, subject to no controul of custom, but always obedient to reason, may change its place,

with the speaker's meaning, through all the words of a sentence. Wherever it alights, it combines itself with the eminent accent of the word; commonly adding to its force, often altering its tone, never removing it from its place, and only sometimes, where some opposition is to be marked within the word, holding any very striking connection with any other syllable.

The operation of emphasis by quantity has place principally in monosyllables ending with vowels; and even there it is, in English speech, always combined with operation by accent. Monosyllables obviously can neither require nor admit distinction of accent within themselves. They receive therefore, according to their greater or less occasional importance among other words, precisely such accent only as emphasis assigns them. When monosyllables ending with a vowel require emphasis, extension of quantity is commonly added to height of tone and force of utterance, for increase of effect. Thus the pronouns, and some other familiar words, as *he, she, me, we, you, do, so*, are acuted and long, or grave and short, as emphasis may, for the occasion, demand.

Extension of quantity has sometimes place in polysyllables, for the purpose of emphasis; in few instances however only, and under particular circumstances, which evade rule, but may be illustrated by familiar examples. If one, simply commanding another, says *go directly*, he speaks the



first syllable of *directly* with a grave accent and a short quantity; expressing the *i* by the fourth short vowel-sound, which is represented by *i* in the first syllables of *direct* and *divide*, by *e* in the first syllables of *detect* and *deride*. But if, impatient of delay, he would urge haste, he will add emphasis to the word *directly*, by substituting, in the first syllable, for the short sound of the fourth vowel, the sound of the first diphthong, which will give the syllable a long quantity; the predominating accent being still preserved to its proper syllable, the second, tho a change of tone insues both in the first and second.

Such extension of the quantity of a vowel, for emphasis, can have place only where a vowel ends the syllable; and there but in few instances, except at the end of a word, and especially in monosyllables, where, as already observed, it is familiar. It will be obvious to the English reader that no purpose of emphasis would warrant the extension of the first syllable of *division* or *denial*.

But there are cases in which, tho extension of the vowel is utterly forbidden, the SYLLABLE may be lengthened for the purpose of emphasis, by addition of consonant-sound. If we say *go immediately*, we ordinarily speak the first syllable of *immediately* short, giving to the *i* the fourth short vowel-sound, and articulating only one *m*. If we want to give more force to our expression, we cannot lengthen the vowel, either by adopting  
the

the diphthongal sound, as in *directly*, or by protracting the simple vowel-sound; the custom of speaking so forbids, that the effect, tho carrying the character of emphasis so far as to point out for notice, would excite notice only for ridicule. But perfectly within the licence which the custom of speaking makes respectable, we may dwell upon the first *m*; and then, articulating the second distinctly, as a separate element, we give a long quantity to the first syllable of *immediately*, by such duplication of consonant-sound, as effectually as to that of *directly* by lengthening the vowel.

All variations of the voice, indicating affirmation, interrogation, admiration, surprize, indignation, complaint, or any other intention or affection of the mind, are modes of emphasis, or pointing out; operating either by accent, or quantity, or both, and therefore never indifferent to the harmony.

For examples of QUANTITY, hitherto, ACUTED SYLLABLES have been generally offered; except in the two last instances, where acuted syllables would not have served. The reason in both cases is the same. The custom of English speech is singularly jealous of the quantity of acuted syllables. It will neither allow the short vowel of an acuted syllable to be extended, as we have observed it permitting in the grave syllable, the first of *directly*, nor the consonant sound to be

doubled, as in the first of *immediately*: at no rate will it allow an acuted syllable to be contracted. Wherever the acute falls, the quantity of the syllable is decided for long or short; no acuted syllable is of doubtful quantity.

But, for GRAVE SYLLABLES, the custom is not so exact. The vowels of grave syllables are seldom decidedly long: in the rapid delivery of colloquial intercourse, almost all are generally short. But solemn elocution will often give them length, where not followed by a consonant within the syllable; and for the purpose of emphasis, as we have seen, a short syllable may sometimes become long. Otherwise the rules of quantity are the same for grave as for acuted syllables. A long vowel, if supported by a following consonant, will make a long syllable, with a grave, equally as with an acute accent; and two consonants, distinctly articulated, tho the preceding vowel be short, whether the accent be acute or grave, will make the syllable formed with that vowel, long.

THE PLACE of the EMINENT ACCENT in words is decided, for every language, by its own rules. For the Latin, as we learn from the highest authority,\* those rules were very few and simple; for the Greek more various. The accentuation of English speech has its laws, of which Johnson, in his grammar prefixed to his Dictionary, has given a collection,

\* Quintil. de or.



collection, yet it has with them much irregularity. The most methodical and completest view of its rules and its anomalies, yet published, is in Nares's *Orthoëpy*; apparently a juvenile work, yet of great merit, and to which the author's revision, in maturer years, might give very high value.

The ACCENTUATION seems to be among the circumstances of language least liable to change. When new words indeed are introduced from another language, the accentuation of those words may be for some time uncertain. Thus, in Chaucer's time, words from the French, ending in *our*, as *honour*, *favour*, admitted the acute on the last, where the convenience of riming poets would have fixed it; but the genius of English speech has long since given it irremoveably to the penultimate. Thus also Spenser pronounced *melancholy*, with the acute on the antepenultimate, while Milton gave the acute to the first syllable, where it remains established. An affectation of foreign idiom has of late years gone far toward abolishing the proper English pronuntiation of the word *environ*, which had been an English word at least from Shakespear's age, and substituting a French pronuntiation for it, with curious absurdity, adds the English sign of the plural, the *s*, which French pronuntiation abhors. But instances of such violent and powerful depravity in the fashion of speech are rare. Nevertheless for the abundance of exceptions to

rules in English speech, all modern compilers of dictionaries, justly weighing the importance of a proper accentuation, have thought it necessary to mark, in every word, the place of the eminent accent.<sup>z</sup>

<sup>z</sup> In some late publications, we find the mark of the acute accent applied to indicate, not an accent, but the articulation only of a final *e*. By this (no reasonable imitation of the French, who, acknowledging no accent in their language, use the sign of the acute to distinguish what they call their masculine *e*.) the writers, or perhaps rather the printers, have been using their ability, which however it may be hoped is not very great, to add most inconveniently to the existing confusion and uncertainties of English orthography.

## SECTION V.

## Of RHYTHMUS or CADENCE.

HAVING observed what are the varieties of sound in English speech, produced by articulation, and how represented in English orthography, what the proportionate measures, or quantities of time required for a just delivery of English syllables, and how far also indicated by orthography, and what the tones by which speech has the grace of melody and energy of expression, we should be possessed of all necessary preparation for the inquiry, What is the rhythmus or cadence of English speech, the foundation of order in the distribution of articulate sounds, through the good or ill management of which the flow of prose is pleasing or offensive, and whereon rests the whole mechanism of verse.

Among the antient writers, from whom anything remains on the subject, we find musical and poetical harmony universally considered as holding the most intimate connection, as being fundamentally the same thing. ‘The doctrine of the harmony of language, even of prose,’ says one of the ablest and most elegant of the Grecian critics, ‘belongs to the science of music;’ and, according to the chief of the Roman, ‘Grammar can-



‘not be complete without music, as it must treat of rhythmus and measures.’<sup>y</sup> If then modern writers, and writers of great ability and great learning, have been universally unsatisfactory in treating of those subjects, if the most learned have shown themselves evidently at a loss to understand much of what remains from the antients upon them, it appears to me to have been owing, in some perhaps to a total ignorance of music, but, in all, to a failure of duly considering the necessary and intimate connection of music with poetry, and the identity of poetical and musical measures. For the texture of musical cadence, we find, is readily comprehended by all of moderately accurate organs, who give it any attention. The difficulties of poetical cadence, seem to arise mostly from the perplexities of articulation, in the various combinations of elementary sounds in syllables. To begin therefore with considering the nature and differences of cadences in music, and then proceed to observe the analogy which the cadences of poetry bear to them, will be found, I think, the ready,

<sup>y</sup> Μουσική γὰρ τις ἦν καὶ ἡ τῶν πολιτικῶν λόγων ἐπιστήμη. Dion. Hal. de struct. or. s. 11. Tum nec citra muscen grammaticæ potest esse perfecta, cum ei de rhythmis metrisque dicendum sit. Quintil. Inst. or. l. 1. c. 4. The intimacy of the original connection of music and poetry, whence the word Μουσική described both, will come under consideration in the sequel. In the passage above cited from Dionysius, the meaning of that word, as Dr. Foster, in his Essay on Accent and Quantity, has well observed, is limited to music by the context.

ready, tho, among the moderns, yet untrodden way, to a just perception of the principles of the harmony of language, and of the mechanism of verse. For this the reader must be prepared with some knowlege of music, without which indeed to speak intelligibly to him of the principles of harmony in speech, can hardly be possible. But a very small amount of musical knowlege, the meer rudiments of musical grammar may suffice. To avoid superfluous detail therefore, it may perhaps be allowed me to suppose information so commonly possessed, and so easy for any to acquire.

The cadences of that music which is now cultivated throughout Europe, are familiarly known, to all acquainted with its first rudiments, by the names of COMMON TIME and TRIPLE TIME: they are in a degree known, even to those wholly uninstructed; for there are few who, from the practice of hearing alone, do not readily perceive the difference between the cadence of a march and the cadence of a minuet, the only kinds of musical cadences essentially different; under which all other varieties, and those but few, are comprized.

In the modern notation of music, the genus and species of the cadence, common time, with its varieties, and triple time with its varieties, are always indicated by their appropriate marks at the beginning of the strain. Moreover, the limits of every cadence are distinguished, by strokes, called

BARS;

BARS; a term which, by an ordinary, yet inconvenient, licence for inaccuracy in language, is also employed to signify what is included between those strokes, namely the notes altogether constituting the cadence.

COMMON TIME is exhibited, in its simplest form by two notes of equal length; TRIPLE TIME by three notes of equal length. But in a series of notes, all of equal length, their time alone cannot mark any cadence; for such a series can impress the ear only as a repetition of single notes. To mark cadence by measure of time alone, there must be contrast of quantities of time, longer notes and shorter, so differing that their proportions may be obvious to the ear. If then, of two equal notes, constituting a bar or cadence of common time, one be divided, and a series be composed of notes so combined, namely one longer and two shorter, or two shorter and one longer alternately, the longer equal in time to the two shorter, the ear cannot hesitate about the character of the cadence; common time will be decidedly indicated. So also if, of three equal notes constituting a bar or cadence of triple time, two be blended, so that the series be composed of notes alternately shorter and longer, or longer and shorter, the longer double in time to the shorter, triple time will be clearly marked. This, which we are fully assured was the principle of the mechanism of Greek and Latin versification, seems with sufficient certainty, also to have been the



the principle of the Greek musical cadences, which would therefore be fundamentally the same as the modern.

But, without variation in the time of notes, character of cadence may be indicated through means of an assisting power, the regular return of something emphatical in tone. Modern music, at least the very modern, constantly uses the instrumentality of tone for the purpose; and is not confined to a single method of applying it. With the voice, and with instruments capable, like voice, of ready variation in loudness and in manner of sound, the beginning of every bar is commonly distinguished by an emphatical note, sometimes called, by writers on music, the **ACCENTED NOTE**. The cadence is thus, especially in music to accompany dancing, often very strongly marked. With instruments like the harpsichord, incapable of variety in the manner of producing sound, and incapable or unready capable of variety in loudness, assistance is derived from an under part or bass. If the bass have a short and a long note alternately, it will mark the character of triple time very effectually for an accompanying upper part composed of equal notes; and if the bass have a long and two short notes alternately, it will mark common time for an accompanying upper part of equal notes. If the bass have only one note in every bar, and that struck with the first note of the upper part, whether in triple or common time, then

then it will have the effect of giving strong emphasis to the first note of the bar, and so mark the cadence powerfully. Nor is the advantage small which modern music draws from these methods of marking cadence; not only as a series of equal notes in the principal air may thus have character of time clearly indicated, but further as, in a series of notes so varied in length, or so minutely subdivided, as to bewilder the unassisted ear, the regular return of the emphatical note suffices to keep the character of the cadence clearly exhibited. Hence then arises opportunity both for more simplicity in music, and for more variety, than if the cadence were marked by quantity, or measure of time, alone.

We have observed that a series of equal notes can, by their time alone, mark no cadence. A single note therefore, extended through the time of a bar, cannot originally excite the idea of any cadence. It wants that character, arising from obvious proportion of parts, which may enable the ear to distinguish it from other measure of time. Yet, though incapable of originally exciting the idea of any cadence, yet, occasionally intervening, and not too often repeated, among more characteristical measures, it may carry on the idea of a measure previously indicated. But, in any series of equal notes, the regular return of emphasis will mark the character of time very decidedly. If it occurs on every other note, common time will

will be indicated; if on every third, triple time; if on every fourth, common time will be marked again; it will be a kind of double common time. Five notes of equal length, however assisted by emphasis, will be a measure not readily distinguished by the ear in the flow of music: its proportions are too little obvious: in modern music therefore it is unknown. But the measure of six equal notes, assisted by the indication of emphasis, will be sufficiently obvious, as a duplication of triple time. If five notes are a combination perplexing to the ear, seven will be still more so, and eight can be but a reduplication of common time. Of minuter divisions, ordinary in modern music, our purpose will not require any notice here.

The fundamental varieties of cadence in music being then no more than the two so generally and familiarly known by the names of common time and triple time, we may proceed to observe what there is in language, that may bear any analogy to those musical cadences. It will be obvious to all, in any degree accustomed to observe language in connection with music, how fastidiously English ears require the coincidence of the musical accent with the orthoëpical, of the first or emphatical note of the bar with the acute or strong accent of a just pronuntiation. Even the most unlearned will take offence where this coincidence fails. Hence it is that foreigners, the ablest musicians, rarely succeed in setting English words to music. Handel,  
tho



tho' altogether wonderfully successful, has in some instances shown himself deficient in English accentuation; whereas hardly the lowest English composers fail of producing the just accordance between the musical and the orthoëpical accents.

But, in regard to any agreement between musical times and syllabical quantities, a general indifference is obvious. Here and there, indeed, we may discover, if we look for it, among the works of the best English composers, what indicates some feeling of quantity in speech; but, in general, neither in the habits and prejudices of English ears (and full as little in those of any other modern European people) nor in the practice of the best musical composers, is there any appearance of solicitude about it. Long syllables are continually set to short notes, and short syllables receive double, triple, any length of time, if not with perfect satisfaction to a discerning ear, attending not to the music alone, but to the meaning of the song, yet without anything like the disgust so ready and so universal, from offence to the orthoëpical accentuation.

If music, some wild kind of music, originated earlier, as Lucretius imagined, from the song of birds, yet a regular music, such as alone we should now call music, seems to have had one birth with poetry. The oldest literary compositions, among all nations, are found to be songs, in which a measured flow of language has been accompanied by a similarly  
measured

measured musical melody. Prose is adverse to connection with music. Every cadence and measure, indeed, of which language is capable, will occur in prose; but that regular arrangement of cadences, which, in poetry cannot be for a moment dispensed with, in prose is no sooner perceived than it offends. If, in modern times, prose has sometimes been successfully set to music, by Handel with the highest success, it has been through ingenious use of the modern licence to assign any length of note, and any number of notes, to any syllable. Thus the modern composer has been enabled to bring the orthoëpical accents of the loose order of prose to that exact coincidence with the measured arrangement of the emphatical notes of music, which, beyond all things, in the connection of language with music, the modern ear requires. But thus prose has no longer the flow of prose. It acquires, through this forced connection with music, the measured step of verse. Recited in such regularly measured time, with the tones of language only, it would not be borne; whereas, on the other hand, that freedom from all striking formality of arrangement, which, in the delivery of prose the ear fastidiously demands, is directly repugnant to any alliance with music.

According to Grecian tradition, the regularity of stroke by which two or three smiths, beating on one anvil, with hammers of different sizes, avoid interference, and produce regular returns of varying  
sounds,

sounds, gave the first idea of cadence. But the human voice, and equally a pipe or flute, supposed the earliest musical instrument, would be observed to have great advantage, by their power of holding tones, not only over the hammers, but over those stringed instruments, of very early invention also, whose sound is produced by a stroke. The syllables of the Greek language then being observed, in common speech, to be some longer and some shorter, the longer generally double in time to the shorter, a regular arrangement of such syllables in speech was found, of itself, to produce a cadence gratifying to the ear. With the flute that cadence could be perfectly imitated; but with the hammers, or a musical instrument struck with the finger or with a plectrum, the imitation would be very imperfect; the sound, not indeed of necessity absolutely ceasing, but sinking and becoming evanescent in the moment after the stroke. The poetical measures of the Greeks therefore, and of their imitators the Latins, were formed on the principle of musical time-keeping, with long and short notes, like the notes of a flute. Accordingly we find wind-instruments were principally used by them for accompanying recitative on the stage.

The cadence of the modern European languages bears a much closer analogy to the imagined origin of the sister arts. How it came to vary from the cadence of those languages to which we



owe the best principles of good taste in all literature, may be matter for future speculation. It may suffice to mention here, what will be shown more completely in the sequel, that the cadence of the modern European languages is indicated, not by the regular arrangement of long and short syllables, but by arrangement of the accents of speech in coincidence with the strokes of the rhythmical hammers; the acute or strong accent corresponding with the sledge's blow. A regular, or nearly regular division of time being still the object, yet accent operating as the time-beater, the ear becomes so engaged with the effect of accent, that exactness in the arrangement and expression of quantities is less important; irregularities, hidden or disguised, passing unregarded.

We have already remarked that, in modern music, tho the arrangement of times, or, in grammatical phrase, quantities, be strictly observed, still something of an emphatical accent is important as a time-beater. It suffices then that the accent of speech operate as a time-beater, to assure the ready association of modern verse with modern music.

It will be obvious to all who have any familiarity with English poetry, that a regularity in the disposition of accents is its most striking characteristic. The far greater part of our poetry is marked by the prevailing alternacy of an acute

and a grave, or a stronger and weaker accent; as in the first lines of Pope's Essay on Man,

Awáke | my Sáint | John, leáve | all méan|er thín|gs,  
To lów | ambítion| and | the práde | of kín|gs.

or these of Addison,

When ál | thy mér|cies, ó | my Gód,  
My rísing| sóul | survéys;  
Transpór|ted with | the viéw | I'm lóft,  
In wón|der, lóve, | and práise.

A far smaller portion of it is distinguished by the return of the acute accent on every third syllable, as in these of Swift,

And we ór|der our súb|jects of év'ry| degré,  
To belíeve | all his| vér|ses were wrí|ten by mé.

or these of Shenstone,

With her mién | she iná|mors the bráve,  
With her wít | she ingá|ges the frée,  
With her mó|desty pleá|ses the gráve:  
She is év'ry way pleá|sing to mé.

If we proceed then to examine English poetry in combination with music, it will be found that, by the former of these arrangements of the accents, language is adapted to ready and intimate coalition with music in common time, and by the latter equally to coalition with music in triple time; so that the only two cadences known to our poetry, are closely analogous to the only two cadences known in modern music, or, perhaps it might be said, are the same with those musical cadences which

which are called COMMON TIME and TRIPLE TIME.

Nevertheless as even prose, through licence for extending or curtailing the time of its syllables, may, with all its abhorrence of regularity, be forced into coalition with musical measures, so, through the same licence, by a more regular and systematical violence, tho never without violence, verse of one cadence may be adapted to music of the other; examples of which will be readily obvious to those in any degree familiar with modern song. But the aptitude and tendency of verse of either CADENCE, is to coalesce with music of the analogous TIME, and with that only.

Names are wanted for our poetical cadences. To use, as too often we find practised, those of the antient metrical feet, iambic, trochaic, anapestic, is to make a gross and most inconvenient confusion of terms. Analogy seems to indicate the appellation of COMMON, or EVEN CADENCE, for that which corresponds with the common time of music, and TRIPLE CADENCE for that which corresponds with triple time.



## SECTION VI.

Of the Mechanism of ENGLISH VERSE: Epic; Lyric;  
Dramatic.

VERSE is distinguished from prose by order in the arrangement of sounds.

Order, in a certain degree, a harmony, a fitness of parts to each other, is necessary to elegance in everything; the flow of sounds in common discourse cannot be pleasing without it.<sup>a</sup>

But any obvious regularity in the flow of sounds in common discourse is offensive. A rime, incidentally dropping, seldom fails to appear ridiculous: a series of blank verse, and still more a series of rimes, would appear grossly absurd. The order of sounds in prose, like the order of forms in a beautiful landscape, not to be decided by rule and line, requires that art should never show itself. But, on the contrary, the order of sounds in poetry, like the forms of a beautiful building, must be so decidedly regular as to be obviously artificial.

The analogical differences of prose and poetry, and landscape and architecture, farther pursued, may farther illustrate the subject. Architecture, tho resting on so different a principle, not only may

<sup>a</sup> Προῆλθε δὲ τὸ Μέτρον ἐκ Θεοῦ, μέτρῳ τὰ τε Ὀυράνια καὶ ἐπίγεια  
νεοσμηκότος· Ἀρμονία γὰρ τίς ἐστι καὶ τοῖς ἰππουρανοῖς καὶ ἐπιγείοις.  
Longin. Fragm.

be admitted in landscape, but may greatly adorn it. Its regularity, to a certain point, is highly advantageous for contrast. Beyond that, it must be carefully disguised. The exactness of the parallelarity of its lines must be lessened by perspective: their continuity must be broken, by a tree crossing them, or by throwing the building into ruin. So in prose, parts of verses continually may and must be admitted: even a whole verse often may be ornamental: but its regularity must be concealed by the flow of sounds preceding and following. The form of a verse, even of a portion of a verse, cannot obtrude itself upon the ear, in the flow of prose, without offence. Equally offensive then in architecture is the irregular line of a clumsy workman, which may approach in some degree the picturesque, and in poetry the irregular measure of the ill-eared versifier, of which the common censure is expressed by the word prosaic. In verse and in architecture art must be evident; and, to satisfy, it must show itself exquisite. Roughness, indeed, well introduced, may please; as, in a building, rusticated stone-work; yet any disproportion, any perceptible inexactness, in up-rights, parallels, angles, or the turn of arches, will surely offend the eye. So, in poetry, tho there are admired examples of rough sound, yet any obvious deficiency in that order, that fitness of parts, which characterizes poetical harmony, will surely offend the ear.

Order is made obvious to the eye, in a building, by the regular distribution of contrasted, yet connected forms ; as pillars of equal sizes, with their equal intervals around a temple, connected by the even pavement on which they stand, and by the superimpending intablature, parallel to the pavement : in the simpler form of a private dwelling, by piers and windows, with a plinth below, and a cornice above ; or merely an eave will have its effect. Order is, in analogous manner, made obvious to the ear, in music and poetry, by the regular arrangement of contrasted sounds ; as time longer and shorter, or tone sharper and flatter, stronger and weaker ; by which cadence is formed.

Rhythmus or cadence is the simplest combination, the lowest measure, by which evident order can be given to the sound of either music or speech. All prose may be analyzed into cadences, and all verse is formed by a regular arrangement of the same cadences. In common speech, or prose, a mixture of cadences, such that regularity may not be obtrusive, and art, if used, may be hidden, is indispensable to the satisfaction of the ear. In verse, on the contrary, as we have observed in the comparison with landscape and architecture, cadences must be disposed with obvious regularity, a regularity that cannot escape the ear.

But language disposed regularly in cadence, without form or proportion beyond what cadence alone can give, would soon become wearisome and  
disgusting.



disgusting.<sup>b</sup> Variety, as one of the most elegant of the antient critics has observed,<sup>c</sup> is so necessary to a pleasing flow of language, that the most elegant symmetry of verse cannot, in any lengthened series, atone for the want of it. To combine variety with symmetry has therefore been the great business of the inventors of both poetry and music. With this view was imagined the arrangement of cadences in small combinations, holding relation to each other, yet separated each by such boundaries, and having each within itself such form, proportion, and self-consistency, that the ear, in perceiving the relation of each to the others, would also acknowledge each as a whole by itself. Such whole or integral, in poetry, forming a larger prosodial measure, we call a *VERSE*; the kind, in the abstract, being designated by the name verse without the article; as we call our own species, in the abstract, man, the individual a man.

In modern music, as the smaller integrals, called bars, have more regularity than the cadences of modern poetry, so the greater require generally less; tho perhaps not less than is allowed to that commonly called Pindaric verse. The greater integral, formerly termed a strain, rather wants a name in modern use. In effect it is distinguished by the close or fall, more or less complete, which gives it termination.

<sup>b</sup> *Rhythmi neque finem habent certum, neque ullum in contextu varietatem.* Quintil. Struſt. Or. l. 9. c. 4.

<sup>c</sup> Dion. Hal.

To discover the mechanism of verse, and through that mechanism exemplify the principles of harmony in language, we must analyze verse. The verse of English poetry may be considered as divided into Epic, and Lyric. Epic, in its etymology, meaning narrative, has its name from being the verse best adapted to lengthened narration; and, being for that reason fitter for heroic poetry, has obtained also the title of Heroic verse. The kind of music which we call Recitative, is that with which it has most fitness to coalesce. Lyric verse is so named from its superior aptitude for that richer and higher wrought music which we call Air or Tune. The Dramatic has less a distinct character, yet may require some degree of distinct consideration.

Pope has had extensive credit as the last refiner of English versification, carrying it to a perfection beyond which the language cannot go. The first lines of his Essay on Man, then, for the simplicity, as well as the acknowledged perfection of their harmony, seem well adapted for a first example. I shall divide the verses into feet, and mark both the quantities and accents of the syllables. For the grounds on which the quantities are assigned, as the matter has never been treated equally at large before, I must necessarily refer to the observations in the foregoing section on the subject. For the accents I shall not differ from the most approved pronuntiation and the most approved dictionaries. To mark the quantities I shall use the characters in common use with grammarians,

grammarians, a horizontal stroke for the long quantity, a curved line for the short quantity. To mark the acute or strong accent, I shall also use the character in common use with grammarians, namely, a strait stroke inclining from the perpendicular to the right. We have noticed a secondary acute, or middle accent, as occurring occasionally in trissyllabical, and always in longer words: in the flow of speech, it frequently distinguishes monosyllables; and not seldom is the principal accent of dissyllables. For this accent I use the strait stroke inclining from the perpendicular to the left, being a mark unwanted for any other purpose. Where it may be requisite to denote Emphasis, these two marks united in a point at top may serve. Grave syllables, commonly called unaccented, will be sufficiently distinguished by being left unmarked.

Awake | mý Saínt | Jōhn, leáve | āll méan|er thínks,

Tổ lów | āmbí|tiōn ānd | the pride | ōf kíngs;

Lét ūs, | sínce lífe | cān lít|tle mōre | súpply

Thān júst | tổ loók | ābout | ūs ānd | tổ díe,

Expā|tiāte frēe | o'ēr āll | thís scēne | ōf mán,

A migh|tý māze, | bŭt nót | wíthout | ā plān;

A wíld, | whēre wēeds | ānd flōwers | promís|cuōus shóot,

Or gār|dēn, tēmp|tīng wíth | fōrbíd|dēn frúit.

Tōgē|thēr lét | ūs beāt | thís ām|ple fiēld,

Trý whát | the ó|pēn, whát | the cōlvērt yíeld;



The lā|tēnt trācts, | thē gǐd|dỹ hēights | ēplōre,

Of āll | whō blīnd|ly crēep | ōr sīght|less fōar;

Eye nā|tūre's wālks, | shōōt fōll|y ās | īt flīes,

And cāch | thē mǎn|nērs līv|īng ās | thēy rīse:

Lāugh whēre | wē mūst, | bē cān|dīd whēre | wē cān,

Būt vīn|dicāte | thē wāys | ōf Gōd | tō mán.

In examining the quantities through these sixteen lines, we find them very variously disposed. Long syllables predominate: but whether the short syllables be more or fewer; whether they occupy more the beginning of the verse, or the middle or the end; whether the short syllable be the first or the last of a foot, or both, or neither; as far as any such variations are carried in these sixteen lines, the verse is so equally a good verse, of that one kind called epic or heroic, that to chuse between the better and the worse would be difficult. A difference of effect indeed is obvious, and the variety, far from objectionable, is pleasing. But it is a variety evidently not reducible to rule; so that the disposition of long and short quantities cannot be the foundation of that order which constitutes the verse.

Not so of the accents. In the distribution of these we find a strict regularity. Alternate syllables bear the acute. Here and there indeed the acute is of the weaker kind, and in three instances, two in the thirteenth line, and one in the fifteenth, each syllable of the foot has a strong accent. Nevertheless THE GENERAL RULE is here sufficiently

ficiently indicated, that, IN ENGLISH EPIC VERSE THE ALTERNATE SYLLABLES ARE ACUTED. We have observed, in the preceding section, how this disposition of the accents produces accordance between verse of the even or common cadence, and music in common time.

Proof of the rule then may be gained from experiment in breach of it. The name SAINT-JOHN, in the first of these verses, as the family name of the person to whom the poem was addressed, is always pronounced as one word, with the first syllable acuted. The same two syllables, equally as one compound word, bearing only one acute accent, but on the last syllable, designates, in common speech, the apostle and evangelist John. It may perhaps be necessary here to observe, that I reckon the accentuation of a just delivery, and not the ephemerid fashion of orthography, the test of a compound word: where two words are so joined that a just pronuntiation allows them but one acute accent, they become really one word. Now the first line of the Essay on Man, with the word Saint-John spoken (for so the poet intended) as the family name, is a verse so clearly harmonious that even children will perceive it; and it is not only harmonious, but it unites dignity with grace in its step. Change the pronuntiation of the name Saint-John only by the accent; move the acute from the first to the last syllable, as would be necessary to designate Saint-John the evangelist, and the harmony of the verse is ruined. Nor does  
it

it thus become a good prose period: it is still verse, but of another kind; its dignity is gone; its former grace is gone; and if grace is still perceptible, it is of another character; as in the well known humorous song,

A cobbler there was, who lived in a stall:

or Swift's,

Next day, to be sure, the captain will come

At the head of his troop, with trumpet and drum.

*Lady's Judgment.*

Nor could those even who have been habituated to confound accent with quantity, and to consider all acuted syllables as long, and all grave or weakly toned as short, easily avoid to perceive, in the instance of the name Saint-John, that the difference arises not from quantity (if quantity mean the TIME employed in pronuntiation) but simply from tone or accent. For, not to speak of the pause requisite between the name Saint-John and the following word, it is impossible to articulate the liquid consonant *l* after the liquid consonant *n* without most evident delay of the voice, so that the time necessarily to be employed in pronouncing the syllable JOHN, and proceeding to pronounce the syllable LEAVE, must, in comparison of the time necessary if a vowel immediately followed, be obviously long.

*fall.*  
*it. if* English Epic verse then, requiring no certain distribution of Quantities, requires a very exact arrangement

*do not comply with the requisition.*



arrangement of Accents. Generally it will have the acute on alternate syllables; and rude, untutored ears are found commonly incapable of perceiving the harmony of verse, where a perfect regularity in that disposition of the accent fails; so that they would have the voice force the tones to it, tho' against the proper pronunciation of words. But the formality of that disposition, unvaried, soon becomes tiresome; and better practised organs readily dispense with it in some degree. Under what limitations it will be necessary to inquire; but, as a preparatory step, it may be advantageous first to take some notice of two other matters, which co-operate in giving variety and character to English verse.

While the intricacies of accent and quantity seem to have deterred some of our ablest critics from the investigation of their effect, another incident of English verse, has engaged their attention. In every epic verse there is a critical **PAUSE**. Far less important than either accent or quantity, and of so quiet and unobtrusive a nature that it remained, till later times, unnoticed, the pause is however of considerable power toward the general effect of the verse. Pope, in one of his published letters, written in early youth, has named, for the proper places of the pause, the end of the fourth, fifth, and sixth syllables; and on judiciously varying it among these situations, he has said, much of the

the merit of versification depends.<sup>d</sup> But, in maturer age, it appears, he found that greater latitude might be allowed. In the third line of the Essay on Man the pause follows the second syllable: in the fourth it is after the seventh: in the seventh line it occurs again after the second syllable, and in the eighth it follows the third. Nor, as we may hereafter see, is it confined, by Pope's own practice, or by that of the best of our other poets, even to these additional situations. Generally indeed, according to his first rule, it should be found at the end of the second foot, or in the middle of the third, or at the end of the third; but it may occasionally appear in any part of the verse. Like a similar pause sometimes introduced in music, which is considered as extraneous to the beaten time, and making no part of the complement of the bar, this poetical pause is extraneous to the cadence, and of consideration only for its effect on the character of the verse altogether.

The other matter requiring notice is RIME; an ornament not of a quiet and unobtrusive character, but, on the contrary, so forcing itself upon the ear's notice, generally indeed, under good management, agreeably, that, with some of very gross and untutored perception, it stands instead almost of all other grace. By writers on versification it has

<sup>d</sup> Letters to and from Mr. Walsh.

been little considered, but for its power of gratifying the ear with accordance of sound. It has however its obvious use, and a very important use, as a time-beater. As Accent assists the distribution of quantities, or supplies the want of character in the distribution, to indicate the boundaries of the primary prosodial measures, called cadences or feet, so Rime gives indication, not to be mistaken or overlooked, of the boundaries of those larger prosodial measures, composed of several cadences or feet, which we call verses. For this purpose Rime is so important, that, tho without analogy in music, wholly unrelated to melody, and only in its office of time-beater connected with measure, scarcely can any verse in our language stand without it, except the epic, which indeed often dispenses with it most advantageously.

To proceed then to the consideration of the varieties allowed in the distribution of accents, assisted by the pause, in rimed and unrimed verse.

The alternacy of a weak and a strong accent, we have observed, is the regular indicant of the even or common rhythmus. In the association of the sister arts, the ill effect of a sameness in the intonation of the poetry is easily obviated by the large and ready powers of music. But when verse is proposed for recitation without music, it behoves the poet to be diligent and ingenious in the use of the scanty resources for variety, which the tones of common discourse afford. Accent however being not the constituent,



stituent, but the indicant only of measure, he will find that the force of the indication, once clearly given, may in progress be occasionally remitted. Ruder ears, indeed, as we have already observed, are apt to be disappointed by the failure of the strong acute in its expected place: but the more practised organ, not wanting the continual return of the more forcible time-beating, is relieved and gratified by its occasional and not unfrequent remission. Accordingly the variety of freest allowance, in the accentuation of verse of the common cadence, is the substitution of a weaker for the stronger acute.

The direct contrary of this, the strong accent on each syllable of the foot, is a variety also allowed occasionally, and with gratification to the ear. But with acute or strong tone equal on each syllable of a foot, not less than with grave or weak tone equal on each syllable, that contrast fails, which should constitute the time-beating, whereon the ear is habituated to depend for indication of cadence. No idea of cadence therefore can thus be originally excited; but the idea, once impressed, will not be destroyed or even checked, for practised ears, by the occasional introduction of feet so accented, among feet which have the time-beating clearly given. It is for the poet's judgement to beware of an intemperate use of either of these sources of variety; of the former especially in languages like the Italian and Spanish, abounding in words of  
many

many syllables; of the latter in languages where monosyllables prevail, as in our own.

I have chosen my first examples of verse from Pope, on account of the generally acknowledged perfection of his versification. But the powers of cadence may be more fairly offered to the judgement of the ear, in verse free from the overbearing ornament of rime; and most fairly if also without pomp of diction; as in the following simply beautiful lines, among numbers that might be selected from Shakespear:

The crōw | dōth sīng | ās swēet|lŷ ās | the lārċ,  
 Whēn nēi|thēr is | āttēn|dēd,—ānd | I thīnk  
 The nīgh|tīngālē, | īf thē | shōūld sīng | bŷ dāy,  
 Whēn ēvē|rŷ gōōse | īs cāck|līng, wōūld | bē thōught  
 No bē|tēr ā | mūsī|cīān thān | the wrēn.

*Merchant of Venice, act 5.*

In these verses we find the remission alone of the accent gives all the variety that, in five lines, as far as depends upon accent, the ear requires.

In the third of the lines quoted from the Essay on Man, the mark of the acute is placed on the second syllable, *us*. This has been ventured under the supposition that, as philosophers, and especially poet-philosophers, not in France only but elsewhere, have been fond of reckoning themselves the greatest of mankind, the bard may have meant an emphatical opposition in that pronoun

to the word *KINGS* in the preceding line. But, were no such opposition to be expressed, the two syllables *Let-us* would be, in pronuntiation, only one word, acuted on the first.

This *TRANSFER* of the accent from the second to the first syllable of the verse, is of very frequent occurrence in our poetry of the common cadence. Rarely so many lines together are found without it as in the beginning of the *Essay on Man*, and often it occurs in many lines together; as in these, with several that follow them, in the same poem:

Thūs thēn | tō mǎn | thē vōice | ōf Nǎltūre spāke,

Gō, frōm | thē crēā|tūres, thŷ | ĩnstrūc|tīon tākē:

Lēārn frōm | thē bīrds | whāt fōōd | thē thīck|lēts yīēld;

Lēārn frōm | thē bēāsts | thē phŷ|sīc ōf | thē fīēld.

In the first foot of a verse, this disposition of the accent is generally pleasing; in any long series of verses, as a variety, it is even indispensable; scarcely in any repetition is it found tiresome; and yet it appears no small anomaly. Not only it is, like the irregular distribution of quantities, without analogy in music, but it has a decided tendency to check and derange the accordance of verse with music. Nevertheless perhaps we may best account for the satisfaction it affords, by reference to what never fails to happen in the progress of our familiarity with music. At first the ear is commonly most gratified with airs of the simplest division of time, but of strong or even  
coarse



coarse contrast of tones, and without accompaniment; the simplest base rather distracts than pleases. But, as such airs become familiar, the ear begins not only to bear; but to require more. An accompanying base, and minuter divisions of time, perplexing no longer, are found gratifying; coarse contrast grows offensive, and the most delicate gradations of tone become delightful. So also, in poetry, as all must have observed, the wholly unlearned perceive the cadence of verse only in the regular return of a strong accent at equal intervals. With more practice, as in music, the ear, improving in quickness and nicety of discrimination, becomes fastidious. The regular return of an equal accent at equal intervals, tires and annoys. The remission, the duplication, and even the omission of the acute, successively become pleasing and cease to suffice for pleasure. Accent therefore holding the lead among the constituents of verse only as indication of measure, if its place may be varied, and the measure not lost to the ear, the variety will be likely, instead of offending, to gratify.

In truth we find this aberration of the accent, in the first foot of an epic verse, so far from interfering with due indication of the intended measure, for practised ears, that it may hold the first place in the first verse of a poem; where any deficiency of indication of the intended measure would, more than anywhere else, be inconvenient

and offensive. We find it in the first foot of the second and third books of the Essay on Man:

Knów then thyself —

Hére then we rest —

in that of the second and third cantoes of the Rape of the Lock :

Nót with more glories —

Clóse by those meads —

and in that of each of the two first lines of the third book of the Iliad,

Thús by their leader's care each martial band

Móves into ranks and stretches o'er the land.

So far indeed is it from offending, that it will be difficult to draw, from the practice of our most approved poets, any rule for limiting its use.

Familiar however as this variation is in the first foot of a verse, it is so rarely found in any other, at least among our later poets, that it may be a question whether they consider it as allowable or not. We find an example of it indeed in the Essay on Man, so early as the thirty-third line, in the fourth foot :

Is the | grèat chaín | that dráws | áll to | agrée ;

but possibly this, tho Pope's, and in the Essay on Man, may be generally considered as not an example to be followed.

Examples however may be found, of very harmonious verses, with the aberration of the accent

in the third foot, and in the fourth, as in this of Addison,

It mést | be sé ; | Pláto | thou reá|sonest wéll :  
and even with the aberration in the first, and in the third or fourth of the same verse, as in the following of Milton,

Thrónes and | impérial pówers,— | óffspring | of héaven.

*Milton, Par. Lost, ii. 310.*

————— Last the bright consummate flower  
Spírits | odórous breáthes;— | flówers and | their frúit,  
Man's nourishment. iv. 483.

————— So steers the prudent crane  
Her annual voyage, borne on winds ; the air  
Flóats as | they páss,— | fán'd with unnúmber'd plémes.  
vii. 432.

Hów art | thou lóst—|hów, on | a súdden, lóst.  
ix. 900.

But in these lines a pause intervenes between the two strong accents, so that the latter begins a hemistic, which might stand as an integral in the versification, a verse by itself; and hence apparently the grace here, which, in the verse quoted from Pope, is wanting.

Very rarely among our best poets, we find the aberration of the accent in the second foot. The very first line however of the *Paradise Lost* offers an example of it :

Of mán's | fírst dis'obé|dience and | the frúit—

for the secondary acute, on the first syllable of *disobedience*, sinks under the impression made by the preceding emphatical syllables, *man's* and *first*.



The effect of this variation is pleasing perhaps to some good ears and not to all. Our poets are evidently sensible that the introduction of it is hazardous.

In the last foot of a verse the predominating accent is strictly required in its regular place, to mark the termination, or, in musical phrase, the fall or close. But why the aberration should be so freely allowed in the first foot, and so hardly in any other; in the third and fourth only when, as following a pause, they are, in a manner, another first, and, in the second so hardly that no rule can be given for its allowance, is not very obvious. What, however, has already been observed of the effect of practice, may account for it in some degree. Those unpractised ears, which, tho' naturally good, can hardly perceive cadence where the weaker accent, even in the regular place, is substituted for the stronger, lose it totally with the transfer of the strong accent from the second syllable to the first. But where habit has made that transfer familiar, the cadence to follow is as readily expected by the ear, on hearing a portion of a verse consisting of two feet, the first accented on the first syllable, and the second on the last, as if the first had its accent in the regular place. That habit, which is powerful in all things, has this power, may be farther gathered from a comparison of our own versification with that of the most harmonious language now perhaps spoken among

among men, the Italian ; which rests on precisely the same principles as our own ; and is in all the more important points the same as our own, differing in little circumstances hardly more than dialects of the same language may differ. But reserving more on this subject for a future opportunity, we may best proceed to observe the analogy between English poetical and musical measures.

To those acquainted with the first rudiments of music, it will be obvious, that, to adapt English epic verse, in its primary and most proper form, as in the two first lines of the *Essay on Man*, to music in common time, the first syllable would assort with a note forming an incomplete portion of a bar, the second with the first note of a complete bar ; and the first syllable of the following line would belong to the same bar with the last syllable of the former line. But if the verse had the double ending, allowed to English dramatic verse, and always required in Italian epic verse, a pause of half a bar must intervene ; and such, in the proper recitation of poetry, commonly does intervene, between the conclusion of one, and the beginning of the next verse. In English epic verse without the double ending, such pause must be, like the pause in the middle of the verse, extraneous to all mensuration of time ; a kind of break in the time equally as in the sound. In neither case however, it might appear, ought the first syllable of the verse to be considered as extraneous to the first foot, which should begin with the acuted  
H 4 syllable,

syllable, as the musical bar with the corresponding accented note. But, tho all poetical measures are of the same origin with musical measures, and rest ultimately on the same principles, yet many circumstances in the existing state of both arts have originated from their separation; whence it has become necessary to find means for making poetry pleasing in recitation without the embellishment of music, and music pleasing in performance without the interest of song. Hence, as we have observed, has arisen that transfer of the accent, gratifying, in poetry, to the ear which will not bear it in music. But this transfer, which produces difficulty for the management of the accordance between the musical and orthoepical accents, so strictly required in the connection of verse with music, produces no change of the times of the verse; it is meerly a change of the manner of time-beating. As, then, the arrangement of music in bars has been decided by the convenience of the musical performer, without any consideration of the connection of music with poetry, so the arrangement of the syllables of verse in feet should be decided by the convenience of metrical analysis, without regard to those divisions which music has established for its own separate purposes. For metrical analysis it will be found obviously most convenient to divide the English epic verse into five complete feet, whether in any of those feet the accent be transferred from the second to the first syllable or no. To follow the manner of the musicians,

would



would produce very awkward anomaly, wherever the transfer of the accent occurs.

Our epic verse is commonly called verse of ten syllables; as the Italian epic, which has always the additional unaccented syllable, is named *endecasillabo*. But the poetical or metrical syllable is not precisely the same with the grammatical syllable. Occasionally we find, among our best and most harmonious versifiers, two grammatical orthoepical syllables occupying the place of one poetical syllable; or, to speak in the more correct and apposite phrase of the antient writers on the subject, we find feet of three syllables filling only the measure of the even cadence, which is generally supplied by two. Our later poets, or their editors, seem much to have feared any exhibition of the trissyllabical foot in verse of that cadence; and the practice has grown, in printing, to deform words by the elision of a vowel, not only where it were better pronounced, but sometimes where it must be pronounced. Thus we find *heav'n* and *giv'n* printed for *heaven* and *given*, tho' to pronounce *heav'n* or *giv'n* as one syllable is impossible. The elided *e* is indeed, if written, not a full-sounded vowel, nor is the syllable formed with it euphonous, but a distinct syllable it will be. In the verses of all our best elder poets, but indeed of all our best poets, trissyllabical feet are found, and generally so found that, as an occasional variety, their effect is pleasing. Commonly they add to the majesty of the flow,  
often

often much to the expression, and, unless indiscreetly used, they never hurt the harmony of the verse. Musical men will know that they bring no difficulty for the connection of verse of the common or even cadence with music in common time. The following examples from Milton would all suffer from a change of the trissyllabical for dissyllabical feet.

—— His form had yet not lost

Áll hēr | ōrīgīnāl brīghtnēss, nōr | āppēared  
Lēss than archangel rūin'd.

P. L. I. 593.

—— And seem to cast

Ōmīnōūs | cōnjēctūre ōn | thē whōle | sūccēss.

P. L. II. 123.

—— With grave

Áspēct | hē rōse, | ānd īn | hīs rīsing seēmed  
Ā pillār | ōf stāte; | dēep ōn | hīs frōnt | īngrāven  
Delīberation fat, | and public care.

P. L. II. 303.

I think, Milton acuted *aspēct*, like *respēct*, on the last.

Oēr mǎnŷ | ā frōzēn mǎnŷ | ā fīēlry Alp,

Rōcks, cāves, | lākes, sēns, | bōgs, dēns, | ānd shādes | of deāth;  
A universe of death, which God by curse

Crēated ēvīl fōr ēvīl ōnly goód,

Whēre āll | līfe dīes | deāth līves | ānd nāture brēeds,

Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,

Abōlmīnāblē

Abŏ|mināblē, ĭnū|tērāblē, | ānd wōrse

Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceived.

*P. L. II. 627.*

The admirable effect of contrast in these lines, all of unexceptionable harmony, is not only in itself, but for the manner of producing it, which the analysis exhibits, deserving attention.

The two next examples are simply harmonious; the three following exhibit effect again.

Alcīnŏ|ūs rēign'd, | fruit of all kind, in coat

Rough or smooth rin'd<sup>e</sup>.

*P. L. V. v. 342.*

Tŏ whŏm | thūs Eve, | wīth pēr|fēct beāu|tŷ ādŏrned.

*P. L. IV. 634.*

———— All unawares,

Flūttērīng | hīs pēn|nōns vāin | plūmb dŏwn | hē drŏpt

Ten thousand fathom deep.

*P. L. II. 934.*

———— Nor was his ear less pealed,

Wīth nŏīssēs lŏud | ānd rūīn|ŏūs, tŏ | cŏmpāre

Grēat thīngs | wīth smāll, | thān whēn | Bellŏ|nā stŏrms

Wīth āll | hēr bāttēr|īng ēn|gīnes bēnt | tŏ rāse

Somē cāp|tāl cītŷ, | ōr lēs | thān īf | thīs frāme

Of heaven were falling.

*P. L. II. 925.*

—— Speak thou, and be it done:

Mŷ ō|vērshādŏw|īng spīrīt | ānd mīght | wīth thēe

I send along.

*P. L. VIII. 166.*

<sup>e</sup> Αλκίνοος δὲ τὸτ' ἤρχε· θεῶν ἀπὸ μῆδ' αἰδώς. *Odys.* vi. 12.

English



English epic or heroic verse then may be described, and its rules stated thus: It is a prosodial measure of five feet of the common or even cadence. In its primary and most regular form, each of its feet has two syllables of equal quantity; and the character of the cadence is given through the marking of time by the regular occurrence of the acute accent on the second syllable of the foot. Accent being thus the power to which the ear becomes habituated to refer for the character of the verse, variety is allowed for the quantities of syllables, too freely to be exactly limited by rule. A certain balance of quantities, however, throughout the verse is required, so that deficiency be nowhere striking. Long syllables therefore must predominate. A redundancy of syllables is sometimes admitted; a deficiency, in epic verse, never. The accents, on account of their power as time-beaters, are subjected to stricter rule. Deviation from the primary arrangement is allowed, for the sake of variety, just so far as not to defeat the purpose of that arrangement, which is time-beating. Under this limitation it is found that the acute accent of the first foot may be freely transferred from the second to the first syllable. A similar transfer is allowed rarely in the third and fourth feet, tho sometimes with very good effect; in the second more rarely; in the fifth never. Under the same limitation the duplication of the acute is allowed. On the other hand its remission

is an indispensable variety, required almost in every line. Even its absence may sometimes be allowed; or, however, the remission may be such as to leave the character of an acute accent but doubtfully perceptible by the ear.

Such is English epic verse without rime. Where that powerful time-beater is introduced, it makes a great change in the character of the harmony; principally by producing a great dependence upon itself. Among rimes a verse is not the highest denomination of poetical measure: it is but a portion of a longer measure, to which rime in a great degree gives form and proportion, and alone gives boundary. The measures formed by rime are either Couplets, or what were formerly called Staves; for which modern use has substituted the Italian word Stanza. Among couplets sometimes the Triplet is introduced. The epic or heroic stanza is a combination of verses, varying in number and in the disposition of the rimes, according to the poet's fancy. It has been originally imagined, either by the Italian or Romance poets, apparently to obviate the tiresome uniformity of the couplet; but it has itself an inherent uniformity such that, for our language, the couplet has been generally preferred.

All poetry seems to have been, among all nations, originally Song. Instrumental music also, among all nations, has been a very early, or perhaps

haps an original, associate of song. With the Greeks, among whom we trace things farthest into antiquity, except for those matters for which we have light among the eastern nations, all recitation of poetry, still in Homer's time, appears to have been musical. Even the Epic, that narrative, by which history was transmitted, and the detail of the most interesting recent events circulated, is, in his frequent notice of it in the song of the bard, always mentioned as accompanied by an instrument. It is amusing and interesting to find testimony to the extent of this practice in the extant relics of the rude literature of our early forefathers, both British and Anglo-Saxon; among whom history, we find, was recorded in song, and an instrument always accompanied the recitation<sup>f</sup>. Thus all poetry appears to have been, originally, in the etymological and proper meaning of the word, Lyrical.

<sup>f</sup> The metrical passage in the Anglo-Saxon annals, which has long since engaged the admiration of the few, whose curiosity has led them to desire acquaintance with the language and literature of our early ancestors, will now be more generally known through Mr. Ellis's notice of it in his recent publication of early English poems. It is a remark of bishop Percy, in his treatise on the English minstrels, prefixed to his collection of antient poems, that the great Alfred, in his version of Boethius, has translated the Latin word *cantare* by the phrase 'to sing to the harp,' thus indicating that, in this country, in his days, the accompaniment of an instrument was esteemed indispensable with song.

While



While the bard's narrative could of itself excite or maintain a high interest among the hearers, the simplest music would be the fittest and most satisfactory accompaniment. But where his tale was already familiar, losing its charms with its novelty, it would, in repetition, become even annoying. New sources of gratification were to be sought, and the means which poetry ceased to afford, he found in music. But it was music still in close connection with poetry. A richer stile of music was cultivated, and thus new poetical measures were wanted, accommodated to such music. **LYRIC VERSE**, as distinguished from Epic, seems to have had its origin, in all languages which possess the two kinds, from improvements in music.

The English epic verse of five feet, through that very construction which particularly qualifies it for recitation with the tones of common discourse, leaving it ready for association with that species of musical melody called recitative, is the least of all our verses disposed to coalition with what, in musical language, is called Air or Tune. Five bars are perhaps never found forming an integral portion of an air or tune. The divisions of modern musical air run mostly in two, or rather four bars, and multiplications of four; as eight, twelve, sixteen, and so forth.

The English lyric measure of far the most frequent use, is accordingly that of four feet of the common cadence. But this is a measure deficient

in

in that contrast of parts which is necessary to a decided character, and little capable of variety, either from accentuation or pause. It can therefore ill support itself without the assistance of that great resource of the modern European languages, *rime*. This powerfully helps to give it character, and at the same time to make a variety sufficient for short poems, without admitting any of those aberrations of the accent, which, tho, as we have seen, in the epic verse, highly advantageous for recitation, are always adverse to coalition with music. Nothing in our language can be more ready for the closest coalition with music than the following lines of Shenstone :

Flow, gé[n]le stream, | nor lét | the vain  
 Thy smáll, | unsúllied stóre | disdáin;  
 Nor lét | the pé[n]sive ságe | repíne,  
 Whose lá[tent] course | resém]bles thíne.

But, in recitation without music, the ear would soon be fatiated by the formality of such couplets. The alternacy of rimes, in the stanza, gives a variety that may support the poet, without the aid of music, to a greater length; as in the following of Collins, which is not unpleasantly extended to six stanzas, without any variation in the accentuation :

To fáir | Fidé]le's grás]sy tómb  
 Soft maíds | and ví]l]age hínds | shall bríng  
 Each ó]pening sweét | of eárl]iest bloóm,  
 And rí]lle áll | the breá]thing spríng.

But

But Milton, desiring that his longer lyrics, the allegro and penferoso, should please in recitation, has preferred another mode of variety.

But háil, | thou Gód|des, fáge | and hóly,  
 Háil, | diví|nest Mél|anchòly.  
 Come, pén|five nún, | devóút | and púre,  
 Só|ber, stéd|fast, and | demúre,  
 All in | a róbe | of dárk|est grain,  
 Flów|ing with | majés|tic traín,  
 And fá|ble stole, | of Cy|prus láwn,  
 Over | thy dél|cent shoulders drawn ;  
 Cóme, | but keep | thy wón|ted state,  
 With é|ven stép | and mú|sing gait,  
 And loóks | commér|cing with | the skies,  
 Thy rápt | soul sít|ting in | thine eyes,

The fifth and eighth of these lines are varied by the aberration of the accent in the first foot, which we have seen so common in English epic verse; but the second, fourth, sixth, and ninth have a variety strikingly of a different character; the first foot is defective; a single acuted syllable only being found in its place. This is a variety wholly inadmissible in epic verse. The five-footed measure, with such deficiency in the first foot, so wants the necessary balance, that it can neither associate with complete five-footed verses, nor stand as a verse by itself. But the lyric measure of four feet so differs in character, that, with this defalcation in the first foot, it is not only mixed advantageously with complete four-footed verses, but has been chosen by some of our most approved versifiers,



for intire poems. The following beautiful example is from Shakespear's play of Measure for Measure :

Táke, | O táke | those líps | away,  
 Thát | so sweétly wère | forswórn ;  
 And | those eyes, | the breák | of dáy,  
 Líghts | that dò | misleád | the mórn ;  
 Bút | my kísses bríng | agáin,  
 Seáls | of lóve, | tho seál'd | in váin &c.

The difference of effect between this and the complete four-footed measure, is such, in recitation, that it appears of quite another character. But in connection with music they are really the same. The truncated verse will associate most readily with music composed for the full measure, and the full verse with music composed for the truncated verse. Gray has begun his celebrated ode on the Bards with the truncated verse, and proceeds with the complete four-footed :

Rújín seíze | thee, rúth|less kíng ;  
 Confússion òñ | thy bân|ners wáit ;  
 Tho, fan'd | by cón|quests' crím|son wíng,  
 They móck | the áir | in ídle státe.

The advantage for effect, both in recitation and in song, will be obvious to all who have been

§ A stanza, of considerable merit, has been added to this little song in Beaumont and Fletcher's Bloody Brother. But the addition gives the sentiments to a man : they have far more pathos and beauty in coming, as in Shakespear's play, from a woman.

accustomed

accustomed to advert to metrical and musical effects. Nor, had the poet given the first foot its unaccented syllable, as by writing

May ruin seize thee—

Let ruin seize thee—

OR

Destruction seize thee—

would he have earned any thanks from the musical composer; whose first complete bar must still equally have begun with the accented syllable, while the preceding grave, wholly unwanted for musical measure, would be disposed of in an incomplete introductory bar by itself. Either increase of time given to the note associated with the last syllable of the verse, or a pause (in musical phrase, a rest) often of advantageous effect, following that note, would fill the measure, and prepare for proceeding in regular time with the next verse.

But another variety, a stanza composed of alternately four and three feet of the common cadence, much affected by our early poets, especially the minstrels and metrical romance-writers, has also found eulogy in modern times. Johnson calls it ‘a soft lyric measure,’ and Baretti, with all the prejudices of an Italian ear against the harsher combinations of elements in our language, says it is ‘di molto piacevol suono,’ of a very pleasing sound; both of them quoting these lines:

When áll | shall práise, | and év|ery lay  
 Devóte | a wreáth | to thee,  
 Thát dáy, | for cóme | it wíll, | that dáy  
 Shall I lámént | to see.

Both of them speak of the measure only as adapted to recitation, without any view to its connection with music. Unconnected with music, its effect certainly is very strongly distinguished from the stanza composed intirely of four-footed verses, with alternate rimes. But, in association with music, it is still the same with the four-footed; that is, it fills an equal number of bars. In speaking thus of the association of music with poetry, I mean a ready and natural association; putting out of the question that ingenious violence, by which verse of one cadence may hold pace with music of the other, or, through a repetition or dislocation of words, not to be borne in recitation, the poet's measure is totally altered, and even prose may be made to march to musical cadence. For examples of the natural association, many of the best airs of the Italian opera, especially of elder times, might be cited; but here the old tune of Chevy Chase may answer our purpose. The holding note at the end of the three-footed verse, or that note with a pause after it, fills the space of the deficient foot. The holding note and the pause are advantageous in music; so that, for association with musick, not less than for recitation, this measure is intitled to the preference which, among the antient minstrels, it extensively obtained.



Verses are found, especially among our elder poets, of three feet of the even cadence, wanting the grave syllable in the first, of two complete feet, and even of two wanting the grave syllable in the first. But none of these are generally advantageous, either for connection with music, or for recitation. Accordingly they have been left, by later poets, mostly for the burlesk, for which they are best adapted.

That kind of combination of verses of various proportions, with rimes at various intervals, which has obtained the title of PINDARIC, merits the favor it has gained, for the pleasantness, and often force, of its effect, in recitation only: for music it has far less aptitude than the simpler lyric measures.

Lyric verse has not often been attempted in English without rime. Milton's translation of the fifth ode of Horace's first book is however well known; and that its measure has had admirers is evinced by Collins's choice of it for his Ode to Evening:

If aught | of oá|tēn stōp | ōr pás|tōrāl sōng,

Māy hōpe, | chāste Eve, | tō soōth | thȳ mōd|ēst cār,

Like thȳ | ōwn sō|lēmn springs,

Thȳ springs | ānd dȳ|līng gāles,

O nymph reserv'd, while now the bright-hair'd fun

Sits on yon western tent.————

An ode of the kind called Pindaric, without rime, has also not only found its way into more than one select collection, but has been distinguished by the eulogy of the compilers; the first stanza is as follows:

This goodly frame what virtue so approves  
 And testifies the pure ethereal spirit  
     As mild Benevolence?  
 She with her sister Mercy still awaits  
     Beside th' eternal throne of Jove,  
 And measures forth with unwithdrawing hand,  
     The blessings of the various year,  
 Sunshine or shower, and chides the madding tempest.

But the merit of these forms of stanza is all for recitation: not even the simpler of them is adapted to ready coalescence with musical air; nor has it yet been shown that those of our measures which are of themselves disposed to ready and intimate connection with music can, with satisfactory effect in recitation, wholly dispense with rime.

The lyric measures, hitherto considered, differ from the epic not at all by the kind of CADENCE, or of what the grammarians call FOOT, but by the number only, with whatever may be incident to difference in number. We proceed now to treat of verse of the other cadence.

The TRIPLE CADENCE had, antiently, as we shall take occasion to observe, great consideration among our poets. It then fell into neglect almost to oblivion, and has been revived but in modern times,

times, for lighter subjects only. The genius of Swift found it accommodated to his favorite burlesk, and Rowe, Shenstone, and others, have shown it adapted, in a degree that preceding poets appear not to have been aware of, to pastoral lyrics. To subjects of solemn dignity it seems, for our present language, not accommodated.

We have observed that, of the common cadence, the verse of five feet is that of most extensive use, and fittest for dignified subjects. It is remarkable that the triple cadence will not bear a verse of five feet: the ear revolts at the combination: its verses are of four, three, or two feet.

At the clóse | of the dáy, | when the hám|let is stíll,  
And mór|tals the swéets | of forgé|fulness próve,  
When nóught | but the tór|rent is heard | on the hill,  
And nóught | but the níght|lingale's sǒng | in the gróve.

*Beattie.*

Yet the róse | has one pów|erful vír|tue to boást  
Far abóve | all the flówers | of the fíeld;  
When its léaves | are all deád | and its có|lors all lóst,  
Still how swéet | a persúme | it will yíeld!

*Watts.*

Despáir|ing besíde | a clear stréam,  
A shép|herd forfá|ken was láid,  
And w híle | a false ny'mph | was his thême,  
A wíllow suppórt|ed his head.  
The wínd | that blew ó|ver the pláin,  
To his síghs | with a sígh | did reply,  
And the broók, | in retúrñ | to his páin,  
Ran móurn|fully múr|muring by.

*Rowe.*



See the fûlries ariſe,  
 See the ſnâkes | that they reâr,  
 How they híſs | in the air.

*Dryden.*

It is the advantage of the triple cadence that it more immediately and decidedly throws language out of all ordinary march of proſe than the common cadence. It is its diſadvantage that it leſs admits thoſe varieties ſo neceſſary to the relief of the ear in longer poems. It will bear no change of the place of the acute; it will allow little remiſſion of the acute, and but rarely the duplication. The pauſe alſo it confines rigidly to its place. The licence for dropping a grave ſyllable of the firſt foot is however unlimited. In burleſk poetry frequently a grave ſyllable of the third foot is omitted; for the verſe of four feet being compoſed of two equal hemiſtics, the beginning of the third foot is, in ſome degree, as the beginning of a new verſe.

We have obſerved that, as in modern muſic, no mixture of the two times is admitted in the ſame ſtrain, ſo neither, in Engliſh poetry, is the mixture of the two cadences in one verſe. Nor do we find them commonly mixed in the ſame poem, unleſs here and there in burleſk. Nevertheleſs Dryden has ventured to introduce verſes of the triple among thoſe of the common cadence in his noble Ode on St. Cecilia's Day.

*Hark,*

Hark, hark, | the hōr|rid soūnd  
 Has rāis'd | up his heād,  
 As awāk'd | from the deād,  
 And amāz'd | he stāres | around.  
 Revēge, | revēge, | Timó|theus crīes:  
     See the fū|ries arīse,  
     See the snākes | that they reār,  
     How they hīs | in the air,  
 And the spār|kles that flāsh | in their ey'es.

That Pope admired the effect thus produced, is evident from his emulation of it in his Ode on Saint Cecilia's Day, but his failure of success may admonish that the attempt is hazardous.

Shakespear, not equally mingling, has however sometimes brought the two cadences very happily together; as in the spirit Ariel's song in the Tempest:

Whēre | the bēe | sucks, thēre | lurk I:  
 In a cōw|slip's bēll | I lie.

Mér|rily, mér|rily, shāll | I live nōw,  
 Un|der the blōs|som that hāngs | on the boūgh.

Arne's air for this song has been justly admired, both for its intrinsic beauty, and for its striking consonancy to the poet's sentiments. But it does not equally harmonize throughout with the poet's measures. There wants the change, from the common to the triple cadence, which, in recitation, has a very pleasing and forcible effect. The air, not following this change, but holding its course in the even cadence, not only fails of a corresponding musical effect, but disguises the  
 poetical

poetical effect. It may then be worth observing, that the change which might be desired from Arne, in conformity to the poetical measure, has been boldly ventured upon, for musical effect, by Handel, where the poetical measure has not warranted, tho it seems to have suggested the thing. It is in his music for these lines from Milton's Allegro:

Or lét | the mér|ry bélls | ring roúnd,  
 And | thě jô|cúnd ré|bēcs sóúnd,  
 Tõ mǎny | ă yóuth | ănd mǎny | ă mǎid,  
 Dăn|cǐng ìn | thě chēc|kēred shǎde.

The music for the first line is, like the poetry, in common time: that for the three others in triple. If we look to the time-beating accent in these three latter lines, we find them well accommodated to common time; but if we look to the quantities of syllables, they are more adapted to triple. Dividing the feet according to quantities, and not according to accents, the first foot of the second line would be a proper trochee, that of the third a tribrachys, that of the fourth again a trochee. The flow thus altogether, and especially the two trissyllabical feet, seem to have suggested to the great composer the idea which in song has produced so happy an effect. The musical reader will find, in that song, strong illustration of the comparative length and shortness of syllables resulting in the connection of verse with music.



music. The first syllable of *jocund*, with its long vowel, but still more that of *dancing*, with its long vowel followed by two consonants, the former a liquid, extend themselves gracefully through the double time necessarily to be given to one of the syllables of the foot, which the short vowels of the first of *rebecs* and *checkered*, followed only by one articulated consonant will not. Handel has therefore judiciously given a short note to the first syllable of *rebecs*, as Arne has to the first of *blossom* in the lines lately quoted from Ariel's song in the *Tempest*. But tho these three lines of Milton, by the accidental order of quantities, are, more than commonly for verse of the even cadence, adapted to coalesce with music in triple time, the musical reader may judge how much more readily and naturally verse of the triple cadence falls in with music in triple time, by altering Milton's verses, as he may easily do better for himself, in some such way as this:

And merrier still let the rebecs resound,  
To many a youth and to many a maid,  
Nimble in dance in the checkery shade.

It appears then that our verses truly lyrical, that is, adapted to ready and complete coalition with musical air, are the four-footed of both cadences, whether perfect or truncated, the stanza of alternately four-footed and three-footed of both cadences, and, for comic poetry, the two-footed of the triple cadence. The two-footed of  
the

the even cadence wants grace in serious song, but is not wholly unsuitable for comic.

The DRAMA requires verse of two kinds; for song occasionally, but principally for dialogue. The former differs no way from the lyrical, of which we have been treating. The latter, in English poetry, is fundamentally the same as the epic; but, having peculiarities, which give it some degree of separate character, it may be commodiously distinguished by its peculiar title of DRAMATIC VERSE.

That amount of regularity which is most satisfactory in poetry simply narrative, is found too formal for dialogue with action; and hence the difference of epic and dramatic verse. To the latter, rime is an incumbrance, so generally offensive, that no attempt to introduce it has succeeded. The variety by which dramatic verse is most distinguished from epic without rime, is the redundant syllable of the last foot, often called the double ending, or, in the phrase adopted by our grammarians from the antient writers on prosody, the hypercatalectic syllable. The following six lines from Samuel Johnson afford three examples of it:

Reflect | that life | and death, | affecting sounds,  
Are only varied modes | of endless being.  
Reflect | that life, | like every other blessing,  
Derives | its value from | its use | alone.  
Not for | itself, | but for | a nobler end  
Th' eternal gave | it, and | that end | is Virtue.

The

The form of our language does not urge to any intemperate use of this variety; nor indeed does it appear, from the practice of our poets, what amount of use of it would be intemperate: it seems as little to require limitation as the transfer of the accent in the first foot.

Among our elder dramatic poets another variety is not uncommon, which the caution of the more modern has generally, and perhaps not advantageously, avoided. It is a redundant syllable after the third foot; which, if a pause follow, divides the verse very effectually into two verses of different proportions. Many examples, pleasing at least to most good ears, may be found in Shakespear: the following are from Milton:

Offering ———

His orient liquor in a crystal glass,

To quench | the dróuth | of Phoébus—— | which as | they  
táste——

—— their human countenance is changed. ——

*Comus*, v. 66.

——— I was awestruck,

'And as | I pást | I wórshipt :— | if thóse | you séek

It were a journey like the path to heaven.——

v. 303.

Bút for | that dâmn'd | magícian,— | lét him be gírt

With all the grisly legions.

v. 603.



In Shakespear sometimes, tho he abounds in beautifully harmonious verses, but in Beaumont and Fletcher continually, we meet with a licentiousness in measure, which later poets have justly avoided. Milton studied the harmony of his language with superior science and with zealous care. Fondly emulating the Italians, he seems to have desired to introduce into our poetry the varieties in measure of which theirs permits the use; yet why in his dramatic works he has so rarely used the hypercatalectic syllable, unfailing in their verse, equally epic and dramatic, is not obvious. The common resource of the Italian poets, for variety in dramatic verse, is the occasional, and not unfrequent, intermixture of three-footed verses, always with the hypercatalectic syllable, among the five-footed.

Milton seems justly to have considered this as less adapted to mix with the English epic. Perhaps the redundant syllable preceding the pause, which varies the measure by dividing the verse into two unequal hemistichs, if such an expression may be allowed, is the best substitute that our language will admit, and not undeserving the regard of our dramatic poets.

The following passages from Milton's *Samson Agonistes*, whether they have been intended for lyrical, or whether for variety of the colloquial dramatic, have much more of the lyrical character,

rafter, and are perhaps the most beautiful specimens of the lyrical without rime ever produced in our language.

O first created beam, and thou great word,  
Let there be light, and light was over all,  
Why am I thus bereav'd thy prime decree?

Thế sūn | tồ mề | ỉs dǎrk,  
And sīllēnt ǎs | thề mōon  
Whēn thề | dếfếrts | thề nīght,  
Hỉd ỉn | hēr vắcắnt ỉn|tềrlủ|nār cǎvẻ.

v. 89.

I wǎs | hīs nũrs|lĩng ỏnce, | ǎnd chỏice | dềlĩght,  
Hīs dếs|tĩn'd frỏm | thề wỏmb,  
Prỏmıs'd | bỷ heǎvẻnlỹ mếs|sagẻ twice | dềscẻnding  
Under | hīs spẻ|ciǎl ẻye.

Abstẻ|mious, I | grẻw ừp, | ǎnd thừv'd ǎmǎin;  
Hề lẻd | mề ỏn | tồ mĩght|lẻt dềeds,  
Abỏve | thề nẻve | ỏf mỏr|tǎl ỏrm,  
Agǎinst | th' ừncỏr|củmcủs'd | ỏur ẻn|ẻmẻes.

v. 640.

The principal varieties, then, which distinguish dramatic verse from epic, considering the practice of our most esteemed dramatic poets as furnishing the rule, are the unlimited licence for the hypercatalectic syllable, or double ending, and the allowance for a sparing use of a similarly redundant unaccented syllable in either the second  
foot

foot or the third. Perhaps also the transfer of the accent in the second foot may be more freely permitted to dramatic than epic verse. Milton has evidently had some partiality for an extension of this licence, in imitation of the Italians, with whom the aberration of the accent in the first and second foot of the same verse is even more common than in either of them alone; insomuch that Tasso, who is reckoned among their more scrupulously harmonious poets, has begun his most admired work, *The Jerusalem Delivered*, with such a verse :

Cánto | l'árme | pietóse e il cà|pitáno.

We find instances of it in the *Paradise Lost* :

Soon had his crew  
Open'd | into | the híll | a spacious wound.

*P. L. I. 690.*

Thou thy foes  
Jústly | hást in | derísion, and | secúre  
Laugh'ſt at their vain designs.

*P. L. v. 737.*

but proportionally more in the *Samson*,

Irre|cóvera|bly dárk, | tótal | eclípse— 81.

Irre|sífti|ble Sám|son, whom | unármed— 126.

Thát in|vínci|ble Sám|son, fár | renówned— 341.

To do justice to the two former of these three last cited lines, the first syllable must be made long by the distinct pronunciation of the doubled consonant *r*. I know such lines are among those which have brought upon Milton, from some, whose



whose judgement I respect, the charge of writing inharmonious verse. So far I think them less suited to the character of our language, that, for epic verse, the imitation of them is not to be recommended.

## SECTION VII.

## Of the History of English Versification.

THE history of all learning, and of every art, cannot but be an interesting portion of the history of mankind. After, therefore, having observed what is the mechanism of the various forms of English verse now in common use, it may be amusing, and, to a speculative mind, perhaps somewhat more than amusing, to trace the history of English versification backward into antiquity.

Modern learning, among the various speeches of Europe, being comprized mostly in three, the Italian, French, and English, in all of which, not without some concert, it has been derived from the Latin and Greek, those three, for that connection, however otherwise widely differing, may be considered as sister tongues. Of these the Italian, taking them in their generally allowed classical state, is considerably the elder. The revived English classical literature is of later birth by near two centuries; and the French, by near one century, younger still. But tho the period of English literature of the modern idiom begins so much later than the Italian, yet an English poet of no mean pretension, Chaucer, was little posterior to the earliest Italian classics; and tho  
the

the French literature, of that dialect which, through political weight and not intrinsic merit, has overborne all others of France, is of a birth so much later still, yet, as far as the Provencial and Languedocian poets may be admitted as predecessors of the French classics, French literature may boast an origin perhaps even earlier than the Italian.

The tracing of English versification upward into antiquity has been much facilitated by some late publications. Bishop Percy's relics of antient English poetry, with his intermingled dissertations, advantageously prepared the way, and seem to have proved an incentive to farther labors in the same mine, among which Mr. Thomas Warton's history of English poetry, and Mr. Ellis's specimens of early English poets with interspersed historical sketches, are conspicuous. What appears to me yet wanting is a collection like Mr. Ellis's, with the order reversed; instead of beginning with an unintelligible idiom, and following the language downward, beginning with the first material variation from modern speech, and tracing it upward. Thus, with the illustration which such a writer as Mr. Ellis would of course be led to give, the reader would be conducted amusingly, and almost unwittingly, to a familiarity with the growing differences; so that, on arriving at length at the celebrated Anglo-Saxon war-song, with which his present work begins, so

K 2

highly



highly interesting now to a few, but repelling, by its unintelligibility, to most readers, who therefore fly to the translations, almost all would be ready to form acquaintance with the original in the energetic language of our early forefathers. Tracing English poetry thus, of merit well to claim the title of classical, to so remote a source, we should go beyond the earliest known excellence of Italian and Provencial poetry.

English literature has by some been reckoned at its summit in queen Ann's reign. But the forms of versification have everywhere had their origin long before the perfection of literature. Our principal and most valuable lyric measures are found, as we shall soon more particularly observe, among the first extant examples of our present language. Our five-footed epic verse, derived apparently from the Italian, was familiar with Chaucer, and seems to have been occasionally introduced among lyric measures before him. It remained for later poets to exert their ingenuity only in combinations of measures. These, in the long course of years between Chaucer and Dryden, became so numerous that it might seem fancy were exhausted, and yet we find room remained for novelty, and of no mean merit. The system of stanzas for the kind of ode, called Pindaric, in imitation of the Greek strophe, antistrophe and epode, has been brought into vogue by the late poets Mason and Gray.

To

To trace our versification then from this late approved novelty upward, we may observe that the epic couplet, tho used by Chaucer, is generally esteemed to have received its last polish from Pope. By its last polish, I understand that which, with modern pronuntiation makes it most grateful to the modern ear; reckoning, in all such comparison, some allowance requisite for the merit of verse made for other times. But in harmony of unrimed verse, Milton's numbers remain, in large proportion, unexcelled, or perhaps unrivalled, by any of later date; and where Shakespear has been in any degree careful, his verses are still among the sweetest in the language: even Spenser's require only a little practice in that obsolete diction which he affected, to obtain the praise of constant sweetness. It is an observation of Hume, that, however uncouth phrases are found abounding in the writers of the age of Elizabeth and James, yet the language of the court, in their time, differed little from that now used in good company. We may go yet higher, and observe that the poetry of the heroic and unfortunate earl of Surrey, in Henry the eighth's reign, rarely wants grace with the pronuntiation of the present day; whence proof appears to result that the general harmony of the language then and at the present day was the same. Some differences in words and phrases indeed we find; and some in pronuntiation, not only we may conclude there were,

but our poetry, as we trace it upward, shows, in many instances, what they were.

The changes in pronuntiation, which poetry indicates, can be only those which affect the harmony. In Milton these are so few, and so small, that the general character of the harmony of his language is scarcely tinged by them; but in Shakespear they begin to be considerable. They are however not altogether disadvantageous, but, by some, may be esteemed the contrary. Terminations in *ion* and *ious*, our poets of the present day would fear, however they might desire, to use as two prosodial syllables: then they were so used generally; insomuch that we find them very frequently forming the concluding foot of a verse. Now they may conclude a verse, but in a very different way: they must be considered only as one syllable, and that syllable no portion of a foot, but beyond the measure, or, in the prosodial term, hyperrhythmical. The termination of the past tense in *ed* also commonly then held its rank as a full prosodial syllable. It were perhaps desirable, both in poetry and in prose, and both for distinctness of speech, and for avoiding often wretched cacophony, that the same might be ventured now; but imperious custom forbids. In the accentuation of words derived from the Latin and French, some differences are found, but they are not many. *Contrary* occurs in Milton, acuted on the second.



Spenser acuted *melánocholy* on the second, and yet we find *contráry* acuted by him on the first. It may be doubted if his accentuation of *melánocholy* ever was popular; but Milton's pronuntiation of *contráry* remains among the lower people.

The earl of Surrey's age forms an era for early English literature. To that accomplished nobleman we are said to owe the first examples of our present epic pentameter unrimed<sup>h</sup>; examples which have been followed so to the glory of English poetry. From lord Surrey's age, looking upward, we find, during the long wars of the roses, almost a void; and then Chaucer beams upon us with a brilliancy the more striking from the extent of intervening darkness. The differences in his language from that of the present day will not appear wonderful, but, rather it may appear wonderful they are no greater. For the peculiarities of his diction, and whence they have arisen, Mr. Ellis may be advantageously consulted. For the harmony of his verses, the more immediate object of our present inquiry, that it may sometimes be hardly discernible, should less excite surprize, than that, with the pronuntiation of the present day, and notwithstanding the vices in our copies of his works, it is in so large a proportion found perfect.

What are all the vices in our copies of his works, is unlikely ever to become known; but

<sup>h</sup> This is asserted by that diligent inquirer after early English poetry, bishop Percy.

his own words, as we may variously gather them, will best enable us to form conjecture. In Elizabeth's reign, Thomas Speght gave an edition, which was republished by him, with a dedication to sir Robert Cecil, afterward earl of Salisbury, still in black-letter, in the year 1602. In the dedication he affirms that he had reformed the whole work by old copies, 'whereby,' he says, 'Chaucer, for the most part, is restored to his owne antiquitie.' In his address afterward to the reader, he says, 'And for his verses, although in diuers places they may seeme to us to stand of unequal measures, yet a skilful reader, that can scan them in their nature, shall find it otherwise. And if a verse here and there fall out a syllable shorter or longer than another, I rather ascribe it to the negligence and rape of Adam Scrivener, that I may speak as Chaucer doth, than to any unconning or oversight in the author. For how fearful he was to have his works mis-written, or his verse mis-measured, may appeare in the end of his fift booke of Troylus and Creseide, where he writeth thus:

And for there is so great diversitie

In English and in writing of our tongue,

So pray I God that none mis-write thee,

Ne thee mis-metre for default of tongue.

Now what might be the *diversitie* produced by the ignorance or carelessness of less eminent editors, even in printing, Speght's own diversities may afford ground for estimation. For, after admonishing

monishing his reader in the words and orthography just quoted, he gives the passage in its proper place, the *fifth* booke of *Troilus*, as it is there spelt, thus :

And for there is so great diversite  
In English and in writing of our tong,  
So pray I to God that none mis-write thee,  
Ne thee misse metre for defaut of tong.

Hence conjecture may be formed of the mis-writing and mis-metering to which popular poetry might be liable, from scriveners, while printing was unknown.

But very many of Chaucer's verses, even with the pronuntiation of the present day, after all hazards of miswriting, are perfectly harmonious; whence the presumption is strong, that, were all written correctly, and spoken with the pronuntiation of his day, we should find all such as in the mass to intitle his eloquence to that high eulogy which, as Mr. Ellis observes, elder writers have bestowed on it. That the general character of the harmony of the language, was no other then than at this day, the proof appears certain. What were the principal differencês of pronuntiation, by which harmony was affected, his verses plainly indicate. Terminations from the Norman-French, in *our*, *ence*, *ure*, and some others, now pronounced with a grave accent, were then commonly acuted, and added to the store of rimes. Of this his *Balade of the Village*, given by Johnson in his

History



History of the English language, affords large example. The vowel *e*, tho often omitted, even in black-letter editions, where it ought to appear, and perhaps sometimes inserted where it ought not, was in Chaucer's time pronounced in a distinct syllable after mute consonants, which it now follows only in an unavoidable whisper<sup>1</sup>; and the habit of speech appears to have given it frequently also after semi-vowels. Of this Johnson was aware, and he has generally marked, tho perhaps not always well, the *e* to be pronounced.

Let us examine a little the following four lines from the Canterbury tales:

Alas, too dear abought she her beautee,  
Wherefore I say that all men may see  
That yests of fortune or of nature  
Been cause of death of many a creature.

*Holt's Remark on the Doctor of Phyfic's Tale.*

These verses, spoken with the pronuntiation of the present day, would give none to imagine that they could be intended for the five-footed epic. The two former approach some of Swift's doggerel in triple cadence, and the two others are Hudibrastic four-footed verses, of the even cadence with the double ending. Fortunately however it remains possible, and not even difficult, to gather, from the tenor of Chaucer's versification, how they would

<sup>1</sup> See the second section of this Inquiry, toward the end.

be pronounced in his own age. That he intended *beauté* to be acuted on the last will be immediately obvious to all; which suffices to make the first line a good five-footed epic. In Chaucer, and others of his time, we frequently find the word *all* written with an added *e*, and so made a dissyllable, *allë*. Thus the second also is a good five-footed epic. In the word *yests*, meaning *gifts*, the harsh combination *fts* cannot be pronounced without a whispered vowel between the *t* and *s*, making really a separate syllable; and accordingly we find it in old writings, as in the pronuntiation of the vulgar at this day, *giftis*, or *giftës*. *Fortune*, *nature*, and *creature*, are generally acuted by Chaucer on the last, and *creature* is likely to have been in his time a trissyllable, as it is in French, and as *creator* is yet in English. Thus the verses all become perfectly good five-footed epics. And that they were intended so to be, those preceding and following, which are so without correction, would sufficiently indicate :

Algate this sylly maid is slain, alas !

Alas ! too dear abought she her *beauté*.

Wherefore I say that allë men may see

That yests of fortune or of nature

Been cause of death of many a creature.

Her beauty was her death, I dare well sayen,

Alas ! so piteously as she was slayen.

The lines here added offer also matter for observations, which may tend to the further explanation of the harmony of Chaucer's poetry. On the

the revival of classical learning, in Henry the seventh's time, the minds of literary men became so bent upon Greek and Latin that their own language fell into neglect. Nor was this, in the moment, so unreasonable as it would be now. Latin became the common language of the learned, in which they held ready communion from nation to nation throughout Europe, when in no other language they could communicate at all; and in Latin and Greek only the principles of good taste were to be acquired. In those circumstances the vernacular idiom of course fell into that neglect, in which it remained in our universities till within the last half century, and remains in a great degree to this day. This state of things considered, it will not appear wonderful if, in the pedantic age of Elizabeth, correctness was little regarded in the Saxon part of our language, and if corruption grew among those words and phrases and inflections which were verging at all toward obsolescence. In Speght's edition of Chaucer, for the word *maid*, in the first of the lines last quoted, is printed *maiden*, to the injury evidently of the harmony. But Chaucer would not write *maiden* for the singular; in his time it was the plural of *maid*; as, in polite language still, *oxen* is the plural of *ox*, and, in the western dialect, *housen* of *house*. In the sixth of these lines then we find the word *beauty* spelt as at this day, whereas four lines only

above



above it is differently spelt. But it appears that the poet intended a different accentuation of the word in the two places, and therefore may have himself used the licence of his day for various spelling. The licence for varying accentuation could scarcely fail to arise with the large accession, about his time gaining vogue in our speech, from a language like the French, which denies to its words any fixt and characteristical accent. This licence was too commodious for hasty rimers, not to be eagerly adopted by the minstrels, who, as bishop Percy has observed, used it freely. Even in Chaucer we find not only French, but Anglo-Saxon words, subjected to it. In the middle of a verse he would acute the words *hánging*, *knówing*, *kéeping*, as we do now, on the first; but, for rime-sake, he does not scruple to demand the acute occasionally upon the last:

Upon his thomb he had of gold a ring,  
And by his side a naked sword honging.  
And dainties mo than been in my knowíng.  
Thus leave I Canacë her hauk keepíng.

*Squier's Tale.*

Nevertheless it appears that this irregularity does not properly belong to the Saxon part of our language, but has arisen from mixture of the French. For the Anglo-Saxon termination of the present participle was not in *ing*, but

in

in *and* or *end*; and to this day, in the western dialect, the nasal *ng* is unheard; the participle, in the pronuntiation of the country people, ending always in *n* simple. The nasal sound seems to have been introduced from the French; and when the French articulation had obtained vogue, the French indecision of accentuation was a convenience which the riming poets would of course catch at. Fortunately the genius of the Anglo-Saxon pronuntiation at length prevailed in this point, and so our poetry is less stained with nasal rimes.

In tracing our versification then upward from Chaucer, and his friend, little older than himself, Gower, we come to a period considerably interesting in the history of language; because, as in our law and constitution, so in our speech, with the uncertainties incident to a great revolution, and in an age dark throughout Europe, better authorities are found for tracing that revolution than any of the same kind, perhaps, in any other part of the world. After the Norman conquest, the court and the nobility spoke Norman-French, the body of the people Anglo-Saxon. Political interests concurred with weight of numbers to make the Anglo-Saxon at length predominate; but with a depraved idiom, very materially altered from the old language, and with a large addition of words from the foreign tongue. The manner of this revolution,

volution, its periods, its amount at different periods, and its final result, are illustrated with much ingenuity, learning, and judgement by Mr. Ellis. The business here will be merely to trace, as far as we can, our versification toward its source.

Chaucer died in the year 1400, Gower in 1402. Beyond them we seem to have nothing, the date of which can be ascertained till we reach Robert of Glocester, whose version of Geoffrey of Monmouth's History of Britain, in rime, Mr. Ellis supposes to have been completed about the year 1280. Mr. Thomas Warton, in his History of English Poetry, has pronounced 'this riming 'chronicle,' as he calls it, 'totally void of art or 'imagination.' Nevertheless Dr. Johnson has thought it worth a long quotation in his History of the English Language; and Mr. Ellis, not reckoning the monk of Glocester among great poets, refers however to parts of his work as marking not only good sense, but eloquence. His verse is that which, so late as the seventeenth century, Chapman chose for his Translation of Homer; a measure which we may perhaps trace hereafter beyond the English language. It is a measure of seven feet of the even cadence, being truly a double verse, and no other than the common modern lyric measure of four and three feet alternately, or, as it has been often called, from the number of  
poetical



poetical syllables, eights and sixes; with the difference only that, whereas in the lyric stanza of four and three feet alternately, it is required that the fourth foot end with the completion of a word, so that a pause may follow, in the couplet of seven-footed verses, the pause, though ordinarily occurring at the end of the fourth foot, is not so indispensably required there<sup>k</sup>. Robert of Glocester's language is, in Johnson's phrase, a kind of intermediate diction, neither Saxon nor English, and, according to Mr. Thomas Warton, its more than common obscurity is partly 'owing to the 'western dialect, in which the monk of Glocester 'was educated.' Something also should probably be attributed to the carelessness and mistakes of transcribers and editors, which Chaucer so deprecated. Attention to the accentuation of his day, as it may be gathered from other early poets, and from himself, is necessary to a ready perception of his measure; but after such attention it will

<sup>k</sup> Samuel Johnson, in his History of the English Language, observes, that 'this measure, polished into greater exactness, 'appeared to our ancestors so suitable to the genius of the 'English language, that it was continued in use almost to the 'middle of the seventeenth century.' I imagine he meant a reference to Chapman's work. His preceding observation, 'that it taught the way to the Alexandrines of the French '[poetry,' would, I think, never have been made, if he had had any familiarity with French poetry in French pronunciation.

not remain at all doubtful. The first of the lines given by Johnson may serve as a specimen:

Of the | batáyles | of Dén|ëmàrch— | that hii | dude in |  
this lónde,

That wórst | were of | all óth|erë— | we mó|të ábbe | on  
hónde.

Worst hii | werë, | vor óth|erë— | áddë|somwánne | ydó,  
As Ró|meynes and Sáx|ons ànd | wel-wúste | that lónd |  
thertò.

Ac hii | ne kēpt | yt hólð|ë nóht— | botë | robby | and  
fénde,

And dés|truë | and bérne | and flé— | and né | couthe  
ábbe|non énde.

And bóte | lute yt | nas wóρθ|they hii- | were ó|vercòme  
ylóme,

Vor myd | ssypes | and grét | poér, | as prést | efsóne | hii  
cóme.<sup>1</sup>

The reader, unversed in our elder poetry, may perhaps think I have gone beyond warrant in assigning syllabical power to the final *e* among these lines, but I am persuaded that, with attention to Chaucer and Gower he will find me justified.

<sup>1</sup> *Hii dude*, they doed, did. *Mote abbe on honde*, must have in hand. *Wuste*, for wasted, past tense, of the same analogy as *knew* from *know*, *blew* from *blow*, *rose* from *rise*, *froze* from *freeze*, and others. *Destruë*, the French word *destruit*. *Bote lute*, but little. *Myd*, the German word for *With*. *Poer*, the Norman *Pouer*, which in modern French is become *Pouvoir*. *Prest* is also the French word.

The following lyric is supposed of about Robert of Glocester's time: yet, with the advantage of Mr. Ellis's reformation of the orthography, it has a smoothness of numbers that might vie with any composition of Pope's age; and the language, tho not all modern, can want a vocabulary scarcely for any reader.

Wín|ter wá|keneth ál | my cáre ;

Nów | these leá|vës wáx|eth báre,

Oft | I sígh | and moúr|në fáre,

Whén | it cóm|eth ín | my thóught,

Of this | world's jóy, | hów it | goeth ál | to nóught.

The measure of the four first of these lines, the fourfooted of the even cadence with the first foot truncated, a favorite measure at this day, we may find occasion to trace to the same forein speech whence we shall find that of Robert of Glocester has been derived. If the age of the poem be rightly assigned, the concluding line of the stanza is by far the oldest example of the fivefooted epic that I know in our language.

Giving modern orthography to antient poetry, as Mr. Ellis has done, is relieving to the reader, if unpractised in the antient orthography, and incurious about it; but highly hazardous for the measures, which the antient spelling will generally indicate to the practised eye, where by the modern they are thrown into confusion and obscurity. I therefore prefer



prefer recurring to Johnson's history of the English language for the following, which he offers as a specimen of Anglo-Saxon poetry, tho it is, as Mr. Ellis has justly said of some earlier specimens, a barbarized dialect, in words only Anglo-Saxon, in idiom corrupted and degraded. The measure, amid all the antiquity of language perfectly obvious, is precisely what Milton has chosen for his *Allegro* and *Penferoso*, the fourfooted of the even cadence, with the first foot complete or truncated indifferently :

Fúr | in sée, | by wést|ë Spáygne,  
 Ís | a lónd | ihóte | Còckáygne.  
 Ther nís | lond ún|der hèv|enríche  
 Of wél | of gód|niš hít | ilíche.  
 Thoy pár|adís | be mír|i and bríyt  
 Cockáyg|ne is | of fáir|ir síyt.

Another lyric poem, in the common modern stanza of fourfooted and threefooted verses, is given by Johnson as one of the oldest extant examples of our present poetical measures. For relief to the reader unversed in the old language, I have placed a version beside it.

Heven and erð he overfieh  
 His eyhen <sup>m</sup> bith fulbriht.  
 Sunne and mone and alle sterren  
 Bieð ðieftre on his lihte.

Heaven and earth he overseeth,  
 His eyes are full bright.  
 Sun and moon and all stars  
 Are darkness amid his light.

He

<sup>m</sup> In the Saxon characters, in which Johnson has given the poem, this word is written *eghen*. But it is evident enough that

He wot hwet ðencheð and hwet    He knows what thinketh and what  
doþ    doth

Alle quike wihte.

Every living man.

Nis no louerd swich is Christ,

There is no lord such as is Christ,

Ne no king swich is Drihte.

Nor king such as is the Lord.

Heven and eiðe and all ðat is,

Heaven and earth and all that is

Biloken is on his honde.

Created is of his hand.

He doð all þat his wille is

He doth all that his will is

On sea and ee on londe.

On sea and eke on land.

He is ord albuten orde

He is beginning all without beginning,

And ende albuten ende,

And end all without end;

He one is evre on eche stede,

He one is ever in each place,

Wende wer ðu wende.

Go wherever thou mayst go.

He is buven us and bineðen,

He is above us and beneath,

Bivoren and ec bihind.

Before and eke behind.

Se man þat Godes wille deð

The man that God's will doth,

Hie mai him aihwar vipde.

He may him everywhere find.

Eche rune he iherð

Each word he heareth,

And wot eche dede.

And knoweth each deed.

He thurh-syð eches iðanc<sup>n</sup>

He sees through every one's thought,

Wai hwat fel us to rede.<sup>n</sup>

Se man nevre nele don god,

The man that never did any good,

Ne nevre godlif leden,

Nor ever good life led,

Er deth and dom come to his dure,    Ere death and doom come to his door,

He mai him fore adreden.

He may him sorely dread.

the Saxon *ȝ* had often the pronuntiation of our *y*, as the Greek *γ* has before the vowels *ε*, *η*, *ι*, and *υ*, among the modern Greeks. We find in Chaucer *yests* for *gifts*, (Holt's Observation on the Squier's Tale) and in Johnson's quotation from Lydgate, a cotemporary of Chaucer, *forgetfulness*; as, in the north of England, at this day, *yat* for *gate*.

<sup>n</sup> Those more versed in the Saxon might probably remedy the incorrectness, if such there is, as I suspect, in this line.

Thus

Thus we have traced our versification of the EVEN CADENCE into antiquity, more than six centuries. The history of the TRIPLE CADENCE remains yet for inquiry; and, notwithstanding its neglect among our principal poets during those six centuries, it may be found to deserve some examination. Within the present century, that cadence, as we have before observed, has gained some vogue for pastoral and burlesk subjects; and Dryden has introduced it happily, and Pope, not without some opinion apparently of its worth, has attempted it less happily, in poems of the sublimest character. But it is remarkable how little of it we find in any collections of old poetry. Milton's published works afford not a single example. In Mr. Ellis's collection, tracing it upward, the first occurring is a song of Queen Elizabeth's reign, by Humfrey Gifford.

You glád|ly, would háve | me to máke | you some tóy,

And yét | will not téll | me whereóf | I should wríte:

The strá|nge|ness of thís | doth bréed | me annóy,

And mákes | me to séek | what thín|gs | to indíte.

The next, by Thomas Tuffer, is attributed to the preceding reign;

In Health to be stirring shall profit thee best;

In sickness hate trouble; seek quiet and rest.

Remember thy soul; let no fancy prevail;

Make ready to God-ward; let faith never quail.

The sooner thyself thou submittest to God,

The sooner he ceaseth to scourge with his rod.



It will be observed that, in all these verses a syllable is wanting in the first foot, which, as we have before remarked, is common in poetry of the triple cadence; but, in the two last of Gifford's a syllable is also wanting in the third foot; a licence which has been sometimes imitated by Swift and other poets of the eighteenth century. Neither Gifford's verses, nor Tuffer's require any deviation from the most approved pronuntiation of the present day, to make their harmony perfect.

An example of another measure of the triple cadence is given in the same collection, also from Tuffer.

What lookest thou hérein to háve?  
 Fine vérse, thy fáncy to pléase?  
 Of mány my bétters thât cráve;  
 Look nóthing but rúdeness in thése.

Mr. Ellis has observed of these lines, that they are in a meter afterward adopted by Shenstone; a remark indicating that so diligent an inquirer had scarcely met with anything of the kind between Tuffer and Shenstone.

From Drayton, who had considerable reputation in the age of queen Elizabeth, there remains a lyric poem in triple measure, still of a different form:

Near to the silver Trent  
 Sirena dwelleth,  
 She to whom nature lent  
 All that excelleth.

This,

This, in pursuing the poem, we find to be an imitation of that Italian measure which Metastasio has chosen for his ode to Venus,

Scendi propizia,  
 Col tuo splendore,  
 O bella Venere,  
 Madre d'Amore.

In the English, however, not only the grace but the decision of the Italian measure fails; the two first verses might be mistaken for one epic of the common cadence, with the aberration of the accent in the first foot,

Néar to the silver Trént Siréna dwélleth;

and the confusion is enhanced by the ornament of rime misplaced in the final syllables of the first and third verses. If rime be given them, which Metastasio has more judiciously omitted, it should be of the kind which the Italians call *sdruciole*, of three syllables, as *merrily* and *verily*. But words of this form of termination are little abundant in our language; and so the popular song of God save the King, which has three consecutive verses in every four, of the same measure with the first and third of Drayton's stanza, is found in large proportion liable to the same ambiguity.

In bishop Percy's collection of old English poetry, we find a poem in the triple cadence, whence the bishop has taken occasion for one of those interspersed dissertations, with which he has

added variety and interest to his publication. The poem, intitl'd the Complaint of Conscience, is without date, but seems to have been of Henry the Eighth or Edward the Sixth's reign; for that it did not precede the reformation is marked by the mention of wives and children of the clergy. The only known copy is so incorrect, that the learned editor has thought it necessary to hazard some amendments, and still the verses are occasionally halting. The intended measure however is perfectly obvious. The first stanza runs thus :

As I walked of late by an wood side,  
 To God for to meditate was mine entent,  
 Where under an hawthorne I suddenlye spyed,  
 A filly poor creature, ragged and rent,  
 With bloody teares his face was besprent,  
 His fleshe and his color consumed away,  
 And his garments they were all mire, mucke, and clay.

In the same collection are many older examples of the triple measure, in poems of considerable merit; especially one intitl'd the Turnament of Tottenham, which, in subject analogous to the famed work of Cervantes, for purity of taste, as well as ingenuity in wit, might bear a comparison with it. Nevertheless the measure, owing probably in a great degree to the carelessness and error of transcribers, is frequently found halting; and so is every other example of the triple measure in the bishop's three volumes. It is to our book of common prayer that I must refer for the most perfect



fect example of the triple measure that I have found of so early an age. That commonly called the old version of the hundred and fourth Psalm must be, I suppose, as old as the Complaint of Conscience, or perhaps older, and its measure is of the same kind :

My soul praise the Lord,	Speak good of his name,
O Lord our great God,	How dost thou appear!
How passing in glory!	How great is thy fame!
Honour and Majesty	In thee shine most clear.

The accentuation of the words *Honour* and *Majesty*, is what obtained in Chaucer's time, and was not wholly obsolete in Spenser's, the acute on the last: but this excepted, nothing different from modern pronuntiation is required to make these lines throughout smooth and harmonious. In the next stanza a halting verse occurs,

In the clouds full sure.

This, however, seems to owe its awkward gait to modern pronuntiation and orthography, the author having probably read,

I'th cloudës full sure,

making *cloudës* a dissyllable, like Chaucer, and reducing *in the* to a monosyllable, as we find frequent in Shakespear.

Thus then we trace the triple cadence, in rimed verse, perfect as high as the age of the Reformation. But far beyond that age there was English poetry

poetry WITHOUT RIME, which we find to have been in its day highly popular, yet which has so gone into desuetude, that the intended measure has become, even to learned and ingenious investigators of our early poetry, incomprehensible ‘The verses,’ says Mr. Ellis, who appears to have examined the observations of preceding critics, ‘are not distinguished from prose, either by a determinate number of syllables, or by rime, or indeed by any other apparent test, except the studied occurrence of the same letter three times in each line; a contrivance which we should not suspect of producing much harmony. This measure is referred by Dr. Percy to one of the hundred and thirty-six different kinds of meter, which Wormius has discovered among the Icelandic poets.’

It is only for the notice with which such critics as Mr. Ellis and the bishop of Dromore have honored it, that I can have any respect for Wormius’s discovery of a hundred and thirty-six Icelandic measures. But the bishop, in his short preface to the poem intitled, the Complaint of Conscience, and in the following observations on the meter of *Pierce Plowman’s Vision*, has indicated that all the old unrimed English poetry has the same measure as the Complaint of Conscience; and that alliteration, not the constituent, for it cannot be the constituent of measure, is used for ornament only in the latter poem, as rime is in the former. Illustration

tion of the justness of this indication will not require any deep or difficult research.

The bishop has named the meter of *Pierce Plowman's Vision* for the subject of his observations, only as that curious poem is the most generally known of many in the same measure, 'that singular species of versification,' as he says, 'the nature of which has been so little understood.' The time when that poem was composed, is pretty well ascertained to have been about the year 1350, or not long after. The author is said by Crowley, the first printer of it, to have been Robert Langland, a secular priest, and fellow of Oriel college, in Oxford, born at Mortimer's Cleobury in Shropshire; but, Mr. Ellis says, 'the only remaining evidence rather indicates that his name was William.' The same elegant critic gives the character of the poem thus: 'It is full of good sense and piety, rendered interesting by a succession of incidents, invivified by strong satire, and ornamented by many fine specimens of descriptive poetry, in which the genius of the author appears to great advantage.' Such merit will give interest to the investigation of the measure, which will alone be our business here.

Notwithstanding the imagined deficiency of measure, and the certain want of rime, in an age when Chaucer was giving new vogue to rime, and new grace to measure in the English language, the form of the verse of *Pierce Plowman's Vision* was popular enough to induce another writer of no

mean



mean talent, to chuse the same, some years after, for a poem of analogous subject, which is yet extant, with the title of *Pierce Plowman's Creed*. Mr. Ellis has observed that this bears evidence of having been composed after the death of Wickliffe, which happened in 1384, and is therefore more modern than many of Chaucer's works. It cannot but follow that the author of the Creed, whose purpose was to impress the people, must have reckoned upon the measure of the *Vision* as a form of verse then grateful to the popular ear, not less, or hardly less, than those which Gower and Chaucer had been leading to new favor. But the popularity of the *Vision* was not momentary. Near two centuries after its first publication in manuscript, three editions of it were printed in the one year 1550, by Robert Crowley, and a fourth in 1561, by Owen Rogers. And there remains evidence that even its measure continued nearly thus long to hold popular favor; for, in the sixteenth century, it was chosen for a poem of considerable length of the Epic kind, describing the memorable battle of Floddon, won by the earl of Surrey, against James the Fourth of Scotland, who fell in it, in 1513. The date of the poem is nearly ascertained, by the mention of the death of James Stanley, bishop of Ely, as a recent event, which happened in 1515.<sup>o</sup>

<sup>o</sup> Percy, on the Meter of *Pierce Plowman's Vision*. Rel. of An. Po. vol. 2.

Alliteration is shown by bishop Percy to have been used occasionally by Icelandic, Scandinavian, Anglo-Saxon, and French poets, but with any regularity and constancy, only, as far as appears, by English poets of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and beginning of the sixteenth centuries. It will be obvious that alliteration cannot make poetical measure. It might possibly, like rime, assist the indication of measure, tho' far less powerfully than rime. But it has been used by the author of *Pierce Plowman's Vision*, and the other alliterating poets, without aim at the regularity necessary to the indication of measure, as a meer ornament for the amusement of the ear. That *Pierce Plowman's Vision*, however, and all the works of its kind, had poetical measure, and were properly verse, in the pronuntiation of their day, is unquestionable. The manner of writing them, in old manuscripts, mentioned by bishop Percy, would alone indicate so much. But we have no occasion to rest on such indication.

The three very first lines of the long passage given by Mr. Ellis, from the *Vision*, are, in modern pronuntiation, without any help, perfectly harmonious four-footed verses of the triple cadence; the fourth halts:

I wot well, quoth Hunger, what sickness you aileth;  
Ye have manged overmuch, and that maketh you groan:  
And I hote thee, quoth Hunger, as thou thy heal willest,  
That thou drink no day ere thou dine somewhat.

The

The failure of rime, with a measure with which we have been accustomed to it, makes a deceiving change, like the failure of the usual dress in a familiar acquaintance. Let rime then be added, and it will escape none that these lines are ordinary four-footed verses of the triple cadence; the three first perfect, like those lately quoted from Tuffer, the fourth wanting something, like several in the Complaint of Conscience:

I wot well, quoth Hunger, what sickness you aileth;  
 Ye have manged overmuch, and that maketh you groan;  
 And I hote thee, quoth Hunger, or health surely faileth,  
 That thou dine every day ere thou take drink alone.

Some incorrectnesses, in poems derived from times before the age of printing, we shall be taught by the admonitions of Chaucer and his early editors, to expect; and so to expect as not to attribute them to the poet himself. With observation and comparison however, we shall find this unrimed verse of the triple cadence little less generally, or less easily, to be restored than Chaucer's, and other rimed poetry of the even cadence, of the same age. Rarely indeed more than three lines together, even of Chaucer's, are found wholly unwanting medication. For the fourth of these from the Vision, no deep search, no supposition of what is not continually occurring in our early versification, is needed. It first halts with the monosyllable *drink*. But it



will not be forgotten that notice has formerly been taken of the impossibility of stopping the voice with the enuntiation of a mute consonant<sup>p</sup>; whence our forefathers commonly added an orthographical *e*, and, as we may gather from their poetry, pronounced it; not after the manner of the present day, in an unavoidable whisper, but aloud, giving it importance enough to have allowance as a poetical syllable. The voice indeed, unable to stop with the enuntiation of a mute consonant, can however pass immediately to the pronuntiation of another consonant, provided a vowel precede the first; but from the distinct enuntiation of the two consonants *nk* it cannot proceed to a third, without the whispered vowel. The *e*, usually concluding the word *drinke* in our early orthography, has certainly been ill omitted here; and, with its pronuntiation, the measure of the former half of the verse will be filled. The liquid consonant *n* does not at all require any following sound. But, in Langland's age, the word *dine* was yet recently gained from the French; and as, even in old English words, the final vowel, which now passes in a whisper, was then often if not generally spoken aloud, it is possible that the poet may have reckoned upon a second syllable in that word. For the modern reader, the antient pronuntiation of the line may perhaps best be pointed out by

<sup>p</sup> Section II. of this Inquiry.

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the character *a* substituted for the antient *e*,  
thus,

That thou drinka no day ere thou dina somewhát.

The disposition to this pronuntiation, in the  
speech of our forefathers, appears in many old  
songs, as in this of Shakespear :

Jog on, jog on the footpath way,  
And merrily bend the stile-a:  
A merry heart goes all the day ;  
Your sad tires in a mile-a.

Winter's Tale, Act 4.

But, in the western provincial dialect, the word  
*dinner* is used as a verb, instead of *dine*, so that  
the line would run,

That thou drinka nó day ere thou dinner somewhát.

In the same dialect it is also ordinary to intro-  
duce a short *a* between two consonants, for easy  
utterance, anywhere : so that the word *somewhat*,  
tho in colloquial hurry reduced to *summut*, would,  
in more deliberate delivery be *somawhat*. Whe-  
ther these modes of speaking obtain in Shropshire,  
the poet's supposed country, or in Worcestershire,  
where the scene of the poem is laid, I have not  
observed ; but I have thought them deserving  
mention, for the sake of showing that our provin-  
cial dialects, now fast wearing out, may yet some-  
times furnish correction for the corruptions, which  
the polite learning of editors has introduced into  
the works of our elder poets.

Where

Where so much corruption has been, as the unquestionable authority of Chaucer, with the proofs found in his editors, give us ground to suppose, and the many learned and able modern inquirers after our antient poetry concur in noticing, it would be unreasonable to expect that every verse of any of those early poems is to be restored to pristine purity, or that the proper harmony of all, were all certainly restored, could be clearly demonstrated: and perhaps, as even in modern poetry here and there a line of less pleasing flow may occur, so also in the elder there may be some which, even with the pronuntiation of their day, were less perfect. We may however refer to the riming poets for example of most of the apparent irregularities, or perhaps all, to be found in this untimed verse. The licences used by riming poets, in verse of the triple cadence, are principally to omit, without limitation, one, and sometimes both the grave syllables of the first foot, to extend this licence to the third foot, as the beginning of a second hemistich; or, rather, as we find it among the earlier, another verse. A grave syllable is also sometimes found added, and sometimes dropped, in almost every part of the verse: but where this has been the purpose of the poet, and where the fault of the transcriber, is often impossible now to tell. It must suffice us, therefore, if the purposed harmony is not always clear,

M

that



that it is often obvious, and rarely beyond reasonable conjecture; and that, when discovered, it is commonly, even with the pronuntiation of a modern voice, satisfactory to the modern ear. For illustration, through some remarks, I will add a few lines from the Vision, tho means occur at present to give them only from Mr. Ellis's quotation, deprived of the old orthography.

Eát | not, I hóte | thee, till hún|ger thee táke,  
 And sénd | thee of his saíce | to favóur | with thy líps :  
 And keép | some till súpper | time, and sít | not too lóng,  
 And ríse | up ere áppe|tite have eát|en his fill.  
 Let | not sir Sur|feit sit | on thy board.  
 Leve him nót | for he is léche|rous and líco|rous of tóngue,  
 And after mány | manner of meát | his máw | is a-húngered,  
 And if thou dí|et thee thús | I dáre | lay my éárs  
 That Phý|sick shall his fúr|red cloke fòr | his food féll,  
 And his clóke | of Calá|brie with áll his | knops of góld,  
 And be fáin, | by my fáith, | his phy|sick to lét,  
 And learn to la|bour with hánd, | for líve|lode is sweet.  
 For múr|derers are mány | leeches; Lórd, | hem aménd !  
 They do men díe | by their drínks | ere destí|ny it wóuld.

The measure of these lines, with modern pronuntiation, such as the orthography indicates, not everywhere exact, is yet abundantly obvious. The inexactness however arises nowhere from deficiency, as in the former lines (for I consider the total failure of grave syllables in the first foot, discreetly used, as within the claimed licence of the measure) but from superfluity of syllables. Our  
 copies

copies of Shakespear, and other poets of his age, show that it would be in the manner of speech of our ancestors to retrench some of the superfluities; and it seems probable that some have been added by the carelessness, or perhaps the ignorant zeal of transcribers. The passage, including the four lines first quoted, might be given, not with any certainty, but I think with a fair probability of directing the modern voice very nearly to the old harmony, thus :

I wot | well, quoth Hun|ger, what sick|ness you aileth :  
 Ye have manged | overmuch, | and that ma|keth you groan.  
 And I hote | thee, quoth Hun|ger, as thou | thy heal willest,  
 That thou drink|a no day | ere thou dine | somawhat.  
 Eat | not, I hote | thee, ere hun|ger thee take,  
 And send | thee o's sauce | to favoûr | with thy lips.  
 Keep | some till sup|per, and sit | not too long,  
 And rise | up ere appe|tite have eat|en his fill.  
 Let | not sir Sur|feit sit | on thy board.  
 Leve him not, | for he's leche|rous and lico|rous of tongue.  
 After niâny | manner of meat | his maw | is a-hungered.  
 An thou di|et thee thus, | I dare | lay mine ears  
 That Phy|sic shall's fur|red cloke for | his food sell,  
 And his cloke | of Cala|brie with all's | knops of gold,  
 And be fain, | by my faith, | his phy|sic to let, and  
 Learn to lă|bor<sup>a</sup> with hand; | for live|lode is sweet.

For

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<sup>a</sup> It is evident from Chaucer that words of this form, borrowed with uncertain accent from the French, were in poetry, however it might be in prose, acuted on either syllable, as the poet's convenience might require.

For murderers are many | leeches; Lord, | hem amend!  
Men die | by their drinks | ere destiny<sup>r</sup> it would.

Bishop Percy has given two extracts from a poem of considerable length in the same measure as the Vision, and, in his opinion, as old, or older.

Christ, Christen king,	that on the crosse tholed,
Had paines and passyons	to defend our soules.
Give us grace on the ground	the greatly to ferve,
For that royall red blood	that ran from thy side.

Rough as some of these verses may appear at first sight, very little is wanting to make them harmonious for the modern voice. To indicate the proper harmony to the modern eye, I would write them thus:

Christ, Christian king,	that on the cross tholed,
Had pains and passions	to defend ouer soules.
Give us grace on the ground	thee greatly to serve,
For that royal red blood	that ran from thy side.

The Latin Christianus, the Italian Cristiano, the French Chrétien, from one of which the word written Christen must have been derived, would all authorize the orthography Christian, and the pronuntiation of three syllables; which, in Shake-

<sup>r</sup> The word *destiny* would be likely to gain its accentuation from the Italian, which, by its poets in books, and by its priests in conversation, has contributed more perhaps to our language than has been generally noticed.

spears



spear's time we find was continually given, at least in the delivery of poetry, to words of that form. Words of the form of *our* we find also frequently, among the poets of his age, poetical dissyllables. But in Chaucer the Saxon termination of the infinitive mood *an* or *en* is of frequent occurrence, so that, taking *our* as a monosyllable, the measure may have been rendered complete by making the preceding word a trissyllable, *defenden*. It was less usual in Chaucer's time to omit the prepositive sign of the infinitive mood *to*, even when the Saxon infinitive termination was used; otherwise, *passions* being adopted from the French, and therefore capable of the acute accent either on the last or the first syllable, the distic might have run thus:

Had painēs and pāssions

Defenden our souls.

I do not mean to offer this as an equally probable reading with either of the others, but it appeared worth while so far to indicate the various ways in which, consistently with what we find to have been the practice in the old language, the apparent imperfections of the verse may be obviated. The other verses of this extract want no correction or explanation. Rime perhaps they may want to satisfy the modern ear, but their measure is obviously regular, of the same kind with that of the hundred and fourth psalm already quoted.

From the same poem the bishop has extracted the following description of Life personified, which may, on more than one account, deserve notice, tho the versification only will be our object here.

Shee was brighter of her blee	then was the bright sonn;
Her rudd redder than the rose	that on the rise hangeth;
Meekely smiling with her mouth	and merry in her lookes,
Ever laughing for love	as she like would.
And as she came by the bankes	the boughes, eche one,
They louted to that ladye,	and laid forth their branches,
Blossomes and burgens	breathed full sweete.
Flowers flourished in the frith	where shee forth stepped,
And the grasse that was gray	greened belive.

Irregular in measure and deficient in harmony as these lines are, with the pronuntiation indicated by their orthography for the modern voice, yet a very moderate allowance only for those circumstances of the pronuntiation of their own day, and of the errors of transcribers, which have been already noticed, is wanting to make them regular and harmonious. Where syllables fail, the loud pronuntiation of the now silent or whispered *e*, or the introduction of the Anglo-Saxon augment *y*, or *a*, so ordinary in Chaucer's time and not wholly obsolete in Addison's, will afford all the necessary supply. Where syllables overabound, the elisions familiar in Shakespear's age, or the omission of an expletive, such as seem to have been often intruded

truded by hasty transcribers, will reduce them to their just number. Perhaps the alterations here following, tho I think all within probability, are rather more than were absolutely necessary :

She was brighter o' her blee <sup>a</sup>	than was the bright sun;
Her rud redder than th' rose <sup>b</sup>	that on the rise <sup>c</sup> hangeth;
Meekely finiling wi' her mouth	and merry in her lookes,
Ever laughing for love,	as she like awould.
As she came by the bankes	the boughes everich one
They louted <sup>d</sup> to th' lady	and laid forth their branches.
Blossoms and burgens	breathed full sweete.
Flowers flourish'd i' th' frith <sup>e</sup>	where she forth astepped,
And the grafs that was gray	agreened belive <sup>f</sup> .

To those whom curiosity may lead to desire acquaintance with this old poetry, the continual halting of the verse, necessarily incident with such pronuntiation as the orthography, under the rules and custom of the present day, indicates, cannot but be annoying, offensive, and even repelling. For the chance therefore of a little assisting toward the removal of such an obstacle, I will mark the measures of another passage of the

<sup>a</sup> Saxon *bleo*, color.

<sup>b</sup> In northern English pronuntiation, at this day, it is *rose*.

<sup>c</sup> Shoot or twig.

<sup>d</sup> Bowed.

<sup>e</sup> *Copsewood*. The words *frith* and *rise* are still in use in the western dialect, for hedging-wood.

<sup>f</sup> *Became green immediately*. *Belive* is yet, in the northern dialect, the ordinary word to express *immediately*.



Vision, which has been a favorite among the inquirers after our early poets, and which, as Mr. Ellis has observed, may have suggested to Milton his sublime description of the Lazar-house, in the eleventh book of *Paradise Lost*. For the reader less versed in our elder language, it may be needful to mention that *Kinde* is the word in use in it to mean *Nature*; and it must be observed that the first phrase of the passage has an Anglo-Saxon inversion, through which, in consequence of the loss of the cases from our present speech, the sense is less obvious. The words, in their modern order, would run ‘*Kinde* (or *Nature*) then heard Conscience.’ The inversion affords strong proof of the author’s attention to measure; for measure alone, as far as appears, can have led him to use it. His mythology, it will be observed, has not been derived from the Greek or Latin, for he makes *Kinde* masculine:

*Kinde* Cón|science then héard, | and came out | of the plánets,  
And sént | forth his fó|rayers ʔ, fé|vers and flúxes,  
Coughs | and cardí|acles, crámps, | and tooth-áchës,  
Boillës and blótch|es and burn|ing agües,  
Phrene|sis and fou|l | evil fó|rayers of *Kinde*.

There

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ʔ Mr. Ellis has given *forriers*, which he interprets *foragers*. But only three lines farther he gives *foragers* in the text. I have already remarked the interchanged use of *g* and *y* among our forefathers, whence I reckon myself warranted, for the sake only of a ready exhibition of the measure, to write *forayers* in both places.

There was "Hár|ow! and hél|pē! hère | cometh Kinde,  
 " With Deáth | that is dréad|ful, to ún|don<sup>z</sup> us all!"  
 A|gē the hóar | he was ín | the van-wárd,  
 And bare th' bân|ner 'fore Deáth: | by ríght | he it claimed.  
 Kínd|e came áf|ter, with má|ny keen fores,  
 Pox and | pestilén|ces, and múch | people shent;  
 So Kínd, | through corrúptions kí|lled full máný.  
 Death cáme | driving áf|ter, and ál | to dust páshed,  
 Kíng|ēs and káy|sers, kníght|ēs and pópes:  
 Many a lów|ēly lá|dy, and lém|an of kníghtēs,  
 Swoón|ed and swélt|ed for sór|row of Deáth's dínts.

Our next step will carry us beyond the utmost period to which English poetry of the even cadence, or any regularly rimed English poetry, has been traced. Mr. Ellis has given an extract of considerable length from a poem, highly curious for its age and its language, preserved among the Cotton manuscripts in the British museum, an English translation of a French poetical version of Geoffrey of Monmouth's British history. The date is assigned to about the year 1185. The dialect is singularly uncouth. In Langland's poem we find the English already a language, tho not polished, yet no way grossly irregular, and in a considerable degree capable, by its copiousness and its force, of every purpose of eloquence. Even in those earliest poems which Johnson has intitled Saxon, there is all the regularity of a formed language; and they are really English, little differing from the

<sup>z</sup> Undon, contracted from Undoan, the Saxon infinitive.

provincial dialects, still spoken, tho now fast going into obsolescence. But in Layamon of Ernley's translation of Wace's Brut, there is all the appearance of a language thrown into confusion by the circumstances of those who spoke it, and struggling to adapt itself to the new state of things. It is truly neither Saxon nor English. Far less therefore than in Pierce Plowman's Vision, or the Poem intitled Life and Death, ought we to expect, in every line, clear indication of the harmony intended: It should suffice if we find frequently that resemblance to the versification of the more formed language of following poets, which may furnish reasonable presumption what the character of the harmony was throughout. Authority, on which explanations might be given, or corrections ventured, of course can be little to be found. We have however the advantage, such as it may be, that can be drawn from the genuine old orthography; which Mr. Ellis has no otherwise altered than by substituting the two letters *th* for the better practice of our forefathers to express the sound by a single character. For example I shall not desire to seek beyond the first lines of his extract; and, all things considered, I think it will appear rather wonderful that the identical triple measure of Pierce Plowman's vision is so often conspicuous, than if there are some lines in which we may be unable to discover the same or any other measure.



Tha the máfs | was isúngen  
 Of chireken<sup>a</sup> heo thrungen,  
 The kíng, | mid his fólke,  
 To his | metē vérdē,  
 And múc|le his dúyethe.<sup>b</sup>  
 Drem | wes on hirede.  
 Tha quéne | on other halve  
 Her hér|berwe isóhte.

Heó | hafde if wifmonne  
 Wún|der ane móui-en.

Tha the kíng | was iséten  
 Mid his món|nen to his méte,  
 To than<sup>c</sup> kíng | came the bíf-  
 cop

Seind Dú|brig the was so god,  
 And nóm | of his háfde  
 His kínc|-helm hóehne.  
 (For thán | mucle gólde  
 The kíng | hine bear n'álde.)

And dúde | anē lásse crune  
 On thas kinges hafde,

When the máfs was sung  
 From church they thronged.  
 The king amid his folk  
 To his meat fared, (went.)  
 And much of his nobility.  
 Joy was through the palace.  
 The queen, on the other side,  
 Her harbour (apartment)  
 sought.

She had of women  
 Wonderous many a one.

When the king was seated  
 Amid his men to his meat,  
 To the king came the bishop,

Saint Dubrig that was so good,  
 And took off from his head  
 His king-helmet high.  
 For that much gold

The king himself bear not would  
 (did not chuse to bear.)

And did (placed) a less crown  
 Upon the king's head.

And

<sup>a</sup> In Mr. Ellis's book *chirecken*. But as neither the tenor of the orthography in this poem, nor the older Saxon orthography, countenance the accumulation of consonants, we may reasonably suspect miswriting, and that it is thus a *c* has been intruded unwarranted, or the word intended may have been *chireken*.

<sup>b</sup> Mr. Ellis, aware of the varying pronuntiation of the Saxon *g* has given the Saxon character, which, as the measure is no way concerned, seemed here unnecessary.

<sup>c</sup> The Saxon accusative.

And feoth-thén   he gon dó	And presently then he went and did
Athere qué ne alfwó.	By the queen also.
Inne Tróie   this was láye,	In Troy this was law
Bih eore æ'lderne dáyē,	From their elder days,
Tha Brútltes of cóme,	Whence the Britons came,
The weóren   wel idóne,	(For those) that were well edu- cated,
A'l ē tha wépmen	All the weapon-men
At heóre   mete sēten	At their meat fate
Sundi   bi heom seólvén.	Afunder by themselves.
That heóm   thuhte wéldon;	(That by them was thought well done)
And a'l sua tha wísmen,	And also the women
Heore iwune háfdén.	Their apartment had.

We are now already far advanced into the age when literature, never wholly extinct, was almost wholly confined to monasteries. Of the laity few could read: almost all the little learning among them was, for memory sake, and for ingaging attention, clothed in verse, and communicated in song, commonly with the accompaniment of an instrument. The cotemporary historian of the great Alfred, Asser, informs us that the literary education of that extraordinary prince began with learning songs in his own language; and it is from an expression of that extraordinary prince himself, in a literary work remaining from him, that bishop Percy justly infers how ordinary, and almost universal it was, in his time, for the music of an instrument

instrument to accompany the recitation of poetry. We have already noticed the power of music so to hide defects in versification, that prose may be made to take its step from musical cadence, as if it were verse. It has also occurred for notice that three syllables may form a foot of the even cadence, accommodated to three notes filling a bar of common musical time, where one note is equal in length to the two others; and so two syllables may make a foot of the triple cadence, accommodated to two notes forming a bar of triple musical time, one of which is double in length to the other.

From this facility of musical division, and the readiness with which the ear, habituated to the stroke of accent for indication of measure, concedes to musical arrangement the proper orthoëpical length of syllables, the riming minstrels took opportunity for licentiousness in measure, far beyond any that can be fairly attributed to those poets of their age who used unrimed verse. Of many of the early pieces, all of them in rime, in bishop Percy's collection, it may, on first view, be difficult to say whether they were intended for common or triple measure. The learned editor has put accentual marks to some of the words, for the purpose of relieving his reader from the perplexity which the apparent irregularity of the measure might occasion. His marks, all directing a pronuntiation different from what modern custom would



would allow, show that he supposed the even cadence intended. But I think, on careful examination, it will appear that in all the earlier, the triple cadence has been intended, and that the accentual marks, directing to a pronuntiation different from the modern, directs generally to what was not in the poets contemplation. The more modern song of Chevy Chase, of which Addison has given his elegant criticism, mistaking it, as the learned bishop has well observed, for the original, is evidently enough the common modern stanza of alternately four feet and three, of the even cadence. Accordingly the old tune, perhaps composed for it on its first publication in Queen Elizabeth's reign, is in common time. But the original song, the first in the collection, appears very evidently intended for the triple cadence. In any endeavour to bring it to the even cadence, it will remain, as the bishop seems to have been aware, rough and inharmonious, beyond what is commonly found in songs of its day, English, Scottish, or of the marches between the two; and far beyond what could be likely to belong to a poem that acquired such popularity, and still in Queen Elizabeth's reign was the delight of Sir Philip Sidney. But let the triple cadence be taken for the basis of its harmony, and there will be scarcely any roughness that will not give way to pronuntiation warranted by what remains indicated of the pronuntiation of those times;

or to correction, that may derive probability from the varieties to be found in manuscripts.

In tracing our poetry upward into antiquity, the oldest which we have been examining, corrupted Anglofaxon, but still Anglofaxon, with scarcely any mixture of another language, affords evidence of a pronuntiation bearing a general analogy to that now used by us, so strong as to encourage a further prosecution of the inquiry. My purpose however will be but a slight examination of the older and purer Anglofaxon poetry, leaving deeper investigation for those better provided with learning and leisure. Errors in transcription, which we find so abounded in Chaucer's age and after him, we may reasonably suspect of being numerous in Anglofaxon manuscripts. It could hardly be otherwise, when to gather a poem from recitation was ordinary, from reading rare. And unfortunately we do not possess means, as for Chaucer's age, to gather their kind, or to calculate their amount. For this, therefore, among other reasons, I shall take my examples where it has happened to me, with little study of the language, to find both the sense and the harmony most obvious; and I have thought it best to give them in characters familiar to all readers, only reserving the Anglofaxon simple representatives of the sounds for which we now use the two characters *th*.

Hwæt ic liopa féla  
Lustlicē yéó

I who poems many  
Lustily (joyfully) erst

Sānc onſælum,  
 Nú ſceal fioſigende  
 Wópē yewāged  
 Wrēccea yiōmor<sup>d</sup>  
 Sīngan farcūidas.

Mé ðios ſiccetung.  
 Hāfaþ agāled.

Sang unſeldom (not ſeldom)  
 Now ſhall bemoaning,  
 With weeping worn,  
 A wretched exile,  
 Sing fore-quothings (ſorrowful  
 ſayings)  
 Me this ſighing  
 Hath enervated.

In this paſſage, from the verſion of Boethius, attributed to the great Alfred, the language is in ſo large a proportion the language of the preſent day, that, after tracing our verſification through the intermediate ſtages, there ſeems little hazard in aſſigning the accents as I have ventured to aſſign them; and then the triple cadence, with very little failure of grave ſyllables, is obvious throughout. The meaſure is that of the hundred and fourth psalm, except that the firſt foot is generally without an unaccented ſyllable, like Metastasio's *Scendi propizia*.

In the next extract from the ſame curious work, a freer uſe, if we may truſt the copy for correctneſs, has been made of the licence to give only two ſyllables to a foot of the triple cadence. Whether the quantity, or proper time of enunciation of ſyllables warranted this in any inſtance, or in any degree, it is impoſſible now to know;

<sup>d</sup> Wreccea or Wrecca, an *Exile*, whence etymologiſts derive our word *Wretch*. Liomor, *ſorrowful, wretched*.



but the irregularity, appears certainly not greater than has been ordinary with the riming minstrels of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, nor is it such but that the triple cadence of the English poetry, through which we have been tracing it, is abundantly evident.

Æála ðu scíppend	O thou shap'ing (creator of)
Scírra tǫngla	The shining stars
Héfonas and eorþan,	Heavens and earth,
Ðú on heahsetle	Thou on high-seat (a throne)
E'cum rícfast,	Ever reignest.
And ðu ealne hræpe	And thou all rapid
Héfon ymbhweárfest,	Heaven round whirlest,
A'nd ðúrh þine háliye miht <sup>e</sup>	And through thy holy might
Tǫnglu yepédest	The stars beneedest (compellest)
Ðæt hí ðe to héraþ.	That they to thee hearken.
Swýlce seo fúnne	Like as the sun
Sweártra níhta	Of swarthy night
Ðíóstro adwæscþ	The darkness dispelleth
Ðúrh thine miht,	Through thy might,
Blácum leóhte	So its blackness with light
Beórhte steórran	Bright of stars

<sup>e</sup> This line, in the printed copy, forms two lines. In the old manuscripts the ends of the verses are commonly marked by points. It is obvious how likely such points must be to fail and to overabound, through carelessness or accident. Accordingly instances are evident where two and even more verses are written, and, in scrupulous conformity to the manuscript, printed as one, as well as where one is divided into two; and perhaps sometimes what we find given as three verses should be only two, dividing the middle line nearly in its middle.

Móna yemétyath

The moon tempers

Dúrh ðinra méhta sped.

Through thy might's speed (effi-  
cacy.)

In the frequent occurrence of two vowels together in Anglo-Saxon words, it cannot now be known with certainty where they may have formed two syllables, where only one, where they may have had a proper diphthongal enuntiation, and where they may have represented but a simple vowel sound. But it is to be observed that, in all our provincial dialects, the pronuntiation of two vowels, with sometimes more and sometimes less of diphthongal union, abounds; especially in the western, which after the union of the heptarchy, was of course the court dialect. But our poets of the present day use the liberty, in some cases, where vowels meet, at their pleasure to give them distinction, as forming two syllables, or to melt them into one; or, however, to reckon them as filling the ordinary measure of one only. Thus Gray has written:

Full many a flower is born to blush unseen.

In this verse are two trissyllabical feet, which might have been avoided, and the measure would have been unquestionably regular, tho with effect far less pleasing, were it written thus:

Full many flowers blow to blush unseen.

I think the probability of equal licence among the Anglo-Saxon poets, may be fairly reckoned  
upon;

upon; and then there will be no difficulty in arranging in triple cadence the following lines of the celebrated ode in the Saxon chronicle on Athelstan's victory. In most of them, indeed, that cadence is strikingly obvious.

Her 'Æthelstan cýning,	Here ( <i>at this time</i> ) Athelstan
'Eorla drihten,	king,
Beórna beán gifa	Of earls the lord,
	Of barons the liberal remun-
	rator,
'And his bróthor eac	And his brother eke,
'Eadmund 'Atheling	Edmund Atheling
'Ealdor lánge tyr,	Through long ancestry supreme-
	ly eminent
Yeslóyon at fæcce,	Slew at sack <sup>f</sup> ( <i>made slaughter in</i>
	<i>battle</i> )
Swéorda écgum,	With swords' edges
Ymbe Brunanburh.	About Brunanburh.
Bord-weal <sup>z</sup> clúfan	Well-built walls they clove
Heówan <sup>h</sup> heatholinda.	Of fortresses lofty.
Hámora <sup>i</sup> láfan	The spoil was left
Afaran Eáwardes.	To Edward's progeny.

Swá

<sup>f</sup> Johnson derives *sack* from the Spanish *sacar*, and *stock* from the French *choc* and the Dutch *schocken*, missing the Saxon word which has been the original most probably of the first, and perhaps of all.

<sup>z</sup> *Bord-weal* seems to have meant a wall artificially jointed, in contradistinction from *weal*, simply, which was more commonly used to express a wall of inferior materials or ruder construction, more common, in those days, than better building.

<sup>h</sup> *Heow*, septum. Lye and Manning's dictionary.

<sup>i</sup> *Ham*, *Hama*, *Hom*, Sax. *Hamur*, Cimbr. *Induvia*, *exuvia*. Supplement to Lye and Manning's dict.



Swá hem yeáthele was	So to them it nobly inherited was,
Frám cneo mægum	From kindred mighty,
That hí at campe óft	That they at camp oft
With láthra yehwánon,	With freebooting foes on all sides,
Lánd yeal gódon	'The land all-good-do ( <i>Their country greatly serve.</i> )
Cyn <sup>k</sup> ) hord and hámas	(Kindred) hoard ( <i>possessions</i> ) and homes
Hettende crungon.	Avenging with slaughter.

I have endeavoured here to profit from Mr. Ellis's copy of this interesting poem, and his ingenious attempts at explanation of the obscure passages; but I have not exactly followed him. He varies widely, not only from the right reverend editor of the Saxon chronicle, whose Latin translation it must be confessed is very defective, but also from the learned editors of the new Saxon dictionary. What however my purpose principally requires to observe, is, that, where very learned

This line, with the next, and the last line of the extract, are the passages which have given most difficulty for interpretation, and have still been least satisfactorily interpreted. I have ventured to offer new conjecture about them; not as what I can undertake to maintain, but rather with some hope of suggesting the way for those better versed in the language, to something more satisfactory.

<sup>k</sup> I am without warrant for the insertion of this word, beyond the advantage, tho perhaps not absolute want, of some such, for filling both the measure and the sense, together with consideration of the proof, furnished by old copies, of the frequency of small omissions in transcription.

men,

men, whose admiration of the luminous parts of this poem has led them to labor at illustration of the obscure, have so differed about the sense, it cannot but afford a gratifying surprize to those curious about the humble subject of this inquiry, to find the measure, among all the varieties of reading, so generally obvious.

I wish I could follow this inquiry up to the works of the sublime Caedmon, whom the author of the ode on Athelstan's victory is esteemed to have emulated successfully; but that I must leave for those who possess more of the requisite learning and more leisure for the pursuit.

## SECTION VIII.

Historical View of the GREEK and LATIN  
LANGUAGES.

THE country to which we owe, not the origin, but the first known perfection of Literature and Fine Taste, is Greece. Brilliant conception and lofty thought and sound judgement are found elsewhere; but that elegant discrimination, whence arises pure taste, not peculiar to the individuals of Greece, appears however to have become there first generally prevalent, and in a manner endemial; so that there only it has formed a national characteristic. The judgement of antient Rome adopted Grecian taste; and, after the example of antient Rome, the judgement of modern Europe cherishes that taste, as among possessions most advantageously distinguishing its people, both within its own bounds and wherever they establish themselves in other quarters of the globe.

Greece was farther eminent by the superiority of its language, the most perfect in expression, and, according to all report and probability, the most generally pleasing in sound of any ever spoken among men. How or where it acquired those perfections, which gave it so great a superiority over the coëval oriental tongues, whence it was in part derived,



derived, we inquire in vain; for in extreme antiquity, we find it already in full possession of them. The Grecian people, holding all other languages in contempt, regarded their own with a pride which its superiority in a great degree justified, and it became studied among them with a fond attention. Study cannot form, but may improve a language, and contribute powerfully to its preservation<sup>1</sup>. A grammarian was a respected character among the Greeks when Alexander's victories extended their speech from the narrow bounds of their republics over the vast countries which had composed the Persian empire; it remained such when the partiality of Rome gave vogue to that language in the capital of the empire the most nearly universal that the world has seen; nor had the respect for it ceased, when the miserable relic of that empire, too weak in arms and too defective in policy to hold its place among nations, sunk under the overwhelming violence of Turkish barbarism. Such was the effect of the fond attention of the Greeks to their native tongue, that the language of Homer, survived him as a living

<sup>1</sup> Artium parens et alrix Græca diligentia est,  
 Literarum porro curam nulla gens attentius  
 Repperit; polivit usque finem ad unguis extimum.

*Terent. Maur.*

speech more than two thousand years ; and, dead as it has been now for centuries, yet to this day, and probably to all posterity, it may be more readily and certainly understood than most living languages.

In a country however divided like Greece, dialects would of course be various ; and, long after Homer, four, with characteristical differences, had nearly equal vogue among different parts of the Greek nation. Herodotus, the father of history, and Hippocrates, the father of physic, wrote in the Ionic : the earlier poets used the dialects of their respective provinces. But Athens, long before eminent, became, about Plato's age, more decidedly the principal seat of Grecian learning, a metropolis for the philosophy and literature of the almost numberless members of the Greek nation. Aristotle, scholar of Plato, was preceptor of Alexander the Great, with whose conquests the Attic dialect spread, and became, as far as they extended, the language of the soldier, the statesman, the courtier, and the man of business, as well as of the man of letters. Athens then, without more power to interfere among the political affairs of nations than now the republics of Hamburgh or Ragusa, was supported and encouraged, administering its own municipal government under its own laws, as a kind of capital of the literary world. Political eminence being denied

to the citizens of the little Grecian states, the exertions of Grecian genius were more generally directed to literary pursuits, and schools of philosophy multiplied in Athens. When all afterward yielded to the overbearing power of Rome, that overbearing power took Grecian genius under its patronage, and the Romans addicted themselves to Grecian learning with so strong a predilection that, in the affairs of letters, the conquerors received laws from the conquered, so that while Rome was the metropolis of arms and politics, Athens remained the capital for the arts and learning of the world.

The Attic dialect thus spreading into use as the common language of civilized nations, a few of its more striking peculiarities were conceded, by the Athenians themselves, to the general practice in speaking of the Grecian people; and thence arose the distinctive name of the NEW ATTIC for this universal language. But, universality attained, the distinction of the Attic name gradually dropped, and the language was called the Greek, or the common speech.

The LATIN language has owed its eminence to the greatness acquired by the city of Rome, which was originally one of many small self-governed towns of the small province of Italy called Latium. Whence the Latins originated is uncertain; but  
it



it remains on good authority reported that within Latium, and on its borders, were some Grecian settlements, if not older than Rome, yet older than any great eminence of that city, which is said itself to have been founded by a Grecian colony. The affinity of the Latin language, as it has been transmitted to us by the Romans, with the Æolian Greek dialect, has been always acknowledged, and is still at this day evident. But the Roman territory bordered on Etruria, whose people, more advanced in arts and sciences than the Latins, are said to have been emigrants from the neighbourhood of Greece, and had Grecian colonies established in their country. Of the Etrurian language some specimens remain, far older than anything preserved of the Latin: but they have been evidently congenial dialects. The Latin language, as spoken by the Romans, gained its polish, and in some degree its character, from oratory, political, forensic, and military, in seven centuries of war, hardly intermitted, foreign and domestic. It was not applied with any success to polite learning till after the reduction of Greece under the Roman dominion; when it burst forth with the dazzling splendor of a meteor, but conforming itself, almost in all points, to Grecian models. As the empire spread, it became the general language of the western provinces, Africa, Spain, the Gauls, Britain, and the conquered part  
of

of Germany. In the eastern the Greek retained a preponderancy; and when at length the empire was divided, the Greek remained the general language of the east, as the Latin of the west. With the western empire the Latin language fell, near a thousand years before the Greek ceased to be a living speech. Decay may still be traced in it, but not to its fall, which seems to have been precipitate. The overwhelming inroads of illiterate barbarians, into the extensive countries where it had prevailed, were like inundations, blotting out the former face of things.

## SECTION IX.

Of the Articulation of the GREEK and LATIN  
LANGUAGES.

ALL inquiry about the harmony and versification of a language were vain and idle, without means for discovering in some degree how it was spoken. But there remains from one of the politest scholars and ablest writers of that splendid era called the Augustan age, in which the new Attic, or common Greek tongue, remained yet in highest cultivation, and apparently in greatest purity, a treatise in which the Grecian alphabet is described. It is not reasonably to be expected that an account of a speech long since dead, composed for those who were familiar with it living, should afford all the information now to be desired; yet, considering how hardly sounds are to be explained by words, without reference to sounds already known, the modern scholar will find far more cause for gratification at the amount and clearness of information given by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in his treatise on Literary Composition, than for complaint of either deficiency or obscurity.

Having divided the letters of the Greek alphabet into vowels and consonants, and then subdivided the consonants into semivowels and mutes, Dionysius proceeds to describe the vowels thus :

Two



‘ Two of the vowels,  $\eta$  and  $\omega$ , are long, two,  $\epsilon$  and  $\phi$ , short, and three,  $\alpha$ ,  $\iota$ ,  $\upsilon$ , double-timed; being sometimes long and sometimes short. The long vowels are of most powerful effect and most pleasing sound, and among them  $\alpha$  has the superiority. It is spoken with the mouth at its utmost opening, and the breath directed upward.

In this description of the Greek alpha of the Augustan age, we have exactly the  $a$  of the modern Romans, and, as far as I have had opportunity to observe and gather information, the alpha of the best educated modern Greeks of Constantinople and Athens. It is not the second English  $a$ , heard in the words *father*, *after*, *command*, which some of our grammarians and lexicographers have inaccurately called the Italian  $a$ , but approaches much nearer, or even reaches the broad sound of the first English  $a$  in *falling*, *taller*, or of the diphthongal character *au*.

Dionysius proceeds: ‘ Next to  $\alpha$  is  $\eta$ . In pronouncing this vowel, the voice hangs about the root of the tongue, and is not delivered upward: the mouth is moderately open.’ In these few words the sound of the third, or slender English  $a$ , heard in *made*, *male*, and expressed by the diphthongal characters in *may*, *maid*, *mail*, is so exactly described, that, notwithstanding the different practice of the modern Greeks, who confound  $\eta$ ,  $\iota$ , and  $\upsilon$ , I cannot doubt but the Greek  $\eta$  of the Augustan age,

age was the same with the English slender *a*<sup>m</sup>. This differs from the Italian long *e*; in pronouncing which the voice comes forwarder in the mouth, and does not hang, as Dionysius describes it for the Greek *η*, about the root of the tongue. The English reader unversed in foreign pronuntiation, may form to himself a perfect idea of the Italian long *e*, by only prolonging, without otherwise altering, the vowel-sound, wherever, in an English word, he finds a short *e* followed by a consonant; as in *men, fell, bet*. The French have both sounds: their *ai* is not distinguishable from ours, and their final *é* has the same sound; but in the middle of a syllable, as in the word *même*, the long *e* resembles the Italian.

Dionysius again proceeds: ‘Ω comes third: ‘ In pronouncing this letter, the mouth is rounded, ‘ the lips contracted, and the breath makes its ‘ effort at the extremity.’ In this pronuntiation of the long *ο*, the English and all the principal modern European tongues agree with the antient Greek.

‘ Inferior to this,’ continues Dionysius, ‘ is υ: ‘ for the lips are considerably contracted, the utterance is choked, and the sound is narrow.’ Here first we find difficulty in the description. The contraction of the lips might indicate the

<sup>m</sup> In the Athenian pronuntiation of Plato’s time, as we learn in his *Cratylus*, eta was analagous to epsilon, and differed from iota. *Cratyl.* p. 418. c. t. I. ed Serran.

Italian *u*, which is the English close *u*, heard in *rule*, or *oo* in *tool*, *moon*; but the suffocation of voice, and narrowness of sound are not imputable to that vowel. Unfortunately the modern Greek pronuntiation will not help us on this occasion, for it gives constantly the same sound to *υ* as to the vowel next described by Dionysius, and clearly marked by him for a different sound. The fancy has been cherished among the French learned that the Greek *υ* was the same with their *u*. But, could it otherwise be supposed that Grecian euphony was tainted with so inelegant a noise, that the grace of Grecian utterance would bear the contortion of the mouth necessary toward uttering that peculiar element of Parisian pronuntiation, Dionysius contradicts it in his description of the next vowel:

‘I,’ he says, ‘is last in merit among the vowels: for, in pronouncing it, the stroke of the breath is about the teeth: the mouth, is less opened than for any other vowel, and the lips give no brilliancy to the sound.’ Here the English long or double *e*, the Italian long *i*, and the modern Greek *iota*, are all so exactly described as to leave no room for doubting that the antient *iota* was precisely the same letter.

Nor can there need completer assurance that the Greek *υ* differed very considerably from the French *u*. For the French *u*, requires a much more  
con-



contracted mouth than the English *e*, or the French, Italian, and modern Greek *i*; and its sound, foreign and unutterable to all European people but the French, is abhorred by the Italians and modern Greeks, and unknown in the southern dialects of France itself.

There remains from Aristophanes, in his *Plutus*, an iambic verse formed intirely of the letter *υ* aspirated. The purpose has been to mark a kind of whistling note of delight, uttered by a hungry man on smelling the roast-meat of a sacrifice. Vossius has inferred that the sound of *υ* was indistinct and even offensive<sup>n</sup>; but this notion seems meerly German; unwarranted by either Aristophanes or Dionysius, and rather contradicted by all antiquity. From Aristophanes himself we have better information in another place: in his comedy of the *Birds*, the cuckoo's note is represented by the word *κορυυ*, which affords no slight evidence that, among the elder Attics at least, the ordinary sound of *υ* was very nearly that of the modern Greek *ου*, the Italian *u*, the French *ou*, and the English *oo*.

But that the sound of ypsilon underwent alterations in the polite pronuntiation of the new Attic, or common Greek, appears certain. Perhaps differences previously existing among the dialects, may have contributed to them; but what

<sup>n</sup> Non obscurum tantum, sed & sædum & impurum.

were the gradations, and when made, by which the great change was produced, from the vowel of the cuckoo's note, which the letter *υ* bore in the days of Aristophanes, to that of the peewit's, which it evidently had among the learned and polite several centuries before the final overthrow of the Greek empire, and which it still holds among the Greeks, we should apparently inquire in vain.

If we have reasonably to complain of any omission of Dionysius, it is that he has not at all described the DIPHTHONGS. It seems likely that the diphthongal characters represented all, in early times, a diphthongal enuntiation, with perhaps, for some of them, some coarseness, which the delicacy of aftertimes avoided by reducing them to a simple vowel-sound. This has happened in our own language; whose provincial dialects retain diphthongal sounds, not ill rejected by polite pronuntiation, tho' polite orthography, not in all instances so reasonably, retains the diphthongal characters. The later Greeks carried this refinement certainly to a great extreme. Not a single diphthong is heard in the polite pronuntiation of the Greeks of the present day; and evidence not unsatisfactory remains that the change was completed long before the subversion of the Constantinopolitan empire. Since that melancholy era indeed the pronuntiation of the politer Greeks, living in necessary seclusion among themselves, appears to have undergone little alteration.

The incidental indications remaining of the antient sounds of the Greek diphthongs are very scanty. We are indebted to the comic poet, representing in his comedy of the Wasps the barking of a dog, for some direction to the antient sound of the diphthong *av*. With the modern Greeks all the combinations of the other vowels with *v*, *o* excepted, are no longer diphthongs, but syllables composed of a vowel and a consonant, *v* being sounded as our *f*. According to Aristophanes, in the place just mentioned, the old diphthong, represented by *av*, must have resembled the Italian *ao* and *au*, the German *au*, and our *ou*. These, all nearly resembling one another, have however their small differences; and the Greek diphthong resembling all, might possibly have some small difference from all.

I will own myself not at all disposed to hold cheap the indication which any general practice of the modern Greeks affords of the pronuntiation of their forefathers; or to concur with Cheke and others of his age, of more book-learning than practice in foreign speech, and, I will venture to add, of more vivacity than judgement, in supposing that a pronuntiation invented under the direction of foreign ears, and executed by foreign voices, can be likely to correct the corruptions which may have arisen in the transmission of a language from father to son, or that they must not rather intrude far greater corruptions. For



the pronuntiation of the antient Greek language I would take no evidence against the practice of the modern Greeks, but the evidence of their forefathers, or the cotemporary Latin authors. From the antient Greeks I know of nothing speaking to the sound of the diphthong *ou*. But the Latin writers universally represent it by the single character *u*. This, with all the Italians, has always the simple vowel-sound represented in our language by *oo*; and with the modern Greeks *ou* has constantly the same enuntiation. I have no difficulty therefore in assigning this as the proper sound of the diphthongal character *ou*, in the new Attic; tho among the older dialects the pronuntiation may have been diphthongal; perhaps, in some of them, like our *ou*.

On the short vowel-sounds Dionysius is very concise. ‘None of them,’ he says, ‘is particularly pleasing, but *α* (for that, as the critics have well observed, is evidently the letter meant, tho it appears *ο* in our extant copies) opening the mouth most, and being spoken most from the *arteria*, displeases least.’

He proceeds then to describe the consonants; and if they had any difference from the pronuntiation of the present day, it is not very decidedly marked, except in the superiority which he attributes to the double consonants, *ζ*, *ξ*, *ψ*, which, in any modern pronuntiation of them, is not obvious. It will however be proper to remark that

two of our consonants, which we have in common with all western Europe, B and D, are alien to the language of the modern Greeks. The sound of B is found among them only in words derived from other languages, where they express it by the double character ΜΒ. Their own Beta is universally pronounced as our V, whether in speaking their modern or antient language. In seeking explanation on this subject among the Roman writers we get no complete decision. But we find that, as early as the Augustan age, the Greek writers expressed the Roman V, in Roman names, often by their Β, and the Roman B often by their Β. It is indeed as likely their language should have wanted our B as our V, for one of which elements their alphabet certainly had not a character. Δ is always pronounced by the modern Greeks as the English *Th* in *this, there*; the Θ being appropriated to the representation of the different sound represented by the same double character, in our orthography, in the words *this, thistle*. The modern Greek pronuntiation of gamma also differs from the practice of most of the western nations. Before α, ο, ω, and ου, it has a sound somewhat between our hard *g* and *h*, of which examples occur in Spanish pronuntiation: but before ε, ι, υ, αι, ει, and οι, it is precisely our *y*. This is a practice certainly not new among the Greeks, but how antient I know of no means to discover.

Among

Among the Roman writers of highest authority we gather a considerable amount of information concerning the pronuntiation of the Latin language, which is generally most interesting where it compares the Latin with the Greek; not only as thus it assists toward a knowlege of the Greek, but as we gain a double clue to what is often not easy to disintangle. The Roman A, it is evident, and the Greek alpha were the same vowel: the Roman character E represented both eta and epsilon: I was precisely iota: O represented omega always, omicron not always: U differed very considerably from ypsilon, which, as a single vowel, the Romans generally represented by their character Y: the Latin U, when long, appears to have been equivalent to the Greek vowel which was marked by the diphthongal notation *ou*, and when short it seems to have approached in sound to omicron; being apparently near in character, or perhaps sometimes the same, with the seventh English vowel, the *u* in *sun*, *sum*, which bears the same sound as *o* in *son*, *some*.

It has been supposed that the Greek alphabet, in the days of some of the oldest extant inscriptions, had only four vowel-characters, A, E, I, O, but Mr. Payne Knight, in his very learned, ingenious, and elaborate essay on the subject, says that all the five single vowels are found in the earliest stage to which the alphabet can be traced.



The omicron nevertheless occurs frequently single, in words where the practice of aftertimes gave the diphthongal notation *ou*, but I do not recollect ypsilon ever standing in the situation of that double character. The presumption follows that the sound represented by omicron alone had more analogy with the sound represented by the combination *ou*, than the sound represented by ypsilon alone. The antient Etruscan inscriptions exhibit no more than four vowel-characters A, E, I, and V. The latter of these probably represented both *o* and *u*; for we find the names Apollo, Castor, and Polydeuces, or Pollux, as the Romans afterward abbreviated the name, written Apvly, Kastvr, and Pvltvke. Nor does the proof rest here; for Quintilian informs us that the early Romans wrote *o* or *u* without very steady discrimination; so that for *Hecuba*, *nutrix*, *dederunt*, *prohaverunt*, were found often *Hecoba*, *notrix*, *dederont*, *probaveront*; and, on the contrary, for *Colchides* and *Polyxena*, they wrote *Culchides* and *Pulyxena*°. The two latter words, passing to them from the Greeks, afford strong presumption of affinity between the Greek omicron and the Roman short *u*; which derives confirmation from other circumstances obvious to the classical reader. Nor are we without additional proof in the mo-

• Quintil. Inst. Or. l. 1, c. 4.

modern speech of Italy, in which we find the Latin *u* frequently becoming *o*, and sometimes on the contrary, tho rarely, *o* becoming *u*.

The Latin consonants appear to have been mostly what are represented by the same characters in most of the modern languages of Europe. Difficulty or doubt occur only about *c*, and *f*, and *v*. Whether *c* before *e* and *i* was pronounced like the English *ch*, as by the modern Romans, Tuscans, and Neapolitans, or like the English *c*, bearing in that situation the power of *s*, which is the pronuntiation of the Bolognese, Venetians, and all the Lombards, as well as of the Spaniards, Portuguese, Provincials, Gascoons, of the greater part of those in short, whose speeches approach the Italian in affinity with the Latin, is a question that can probably never be resolved. What also was that pronuntiation of *f* which, in the times of Cicero and Quintilian, defied the power of a Grecian voice\*, will probably be ever sought in vain; for the modern Greek *φ* is precisely the modern Italian *f* and our own, in common with the rest of Europe. It has been, of later years, generally agreed among the learned that the Roman *V* was pronounced as our *W*. Mr. Payne Knight says it certainly was, and I reckon his authority high. But the Greek writers represented the Roman *V*, in proper names, sometimes by their

\* Quintil. Inst. Cr.

diphthongal notation *OR*, which now among the Greeks, and probably always, had, before a vowel, the power of our *W*; and sometimes they represented it by their single character *B*, which I think we may say certainly never had that power, but probably always, at least among some of the Greeks and on some occasions, the power of our *V*. In addition then to this evidence from antient orthography, we gain proof from modern pronuntiation, not in one country or one language, but in widely distant countries and very different languages, of the probability that the pronuntiation of this character was not always and everywhere the same. The joke against the cockneys, about *wine* and *vine*, *weal* and *veal*, with their clear ability to make the distinction of the words, and their inability, from habit, to avoid perversion of the distinction, is familiar among ourselves. But among the Neapolitans, and among the Languedocians and Provincials, we find a similar confusion. The *W* they have not in their pronuntiation; but they pronounce indifferently *b* and *v*; insomuch that among the Languedocians it is common to write only one character for representation of either sound. In the speech of Rome itself we find a near approach to the London cockney confusion of *V* and *W*. The name formed from the Latin *Paulus*, for instance, the modern Romans speak and write indifferently *Paolo* and *Pavolo*, while the Spaniards write it *Pablo*, and pronounce  
either



either *Pablo* or *Pavlo*. It appears to me probable that the old Roman V was of double, or rather treble pronuntiation, sometimes as our V, sometimes as our W, and sometimes, it should appear from the poets, no way differing from the Latin vowel U.

## SECTION X.

Of the Orthography, Quantity, and Accent of the GREEK and  
LATIN LANGUAGES.

WE gather satisfactorily, from the Greek and Latin writers, that the orthography of their languages was not irregular and preposterous, like the English, nor abounding like the French, with letters for the eye which, for the ear, are nullities, but, as the modern Italian and Spanish and Greek, simple and rational, so that when the sounds, peculiar to the several characters and to a very few arbitrary combinations, were known, the articulation of syllables could hardly be mistaken. Having surveyed the alphabets, therefore, we may proceed to inquire concerning those inseparable concomitants of articulation, so important in the Harmony of Language, Accent, and Quantity.

‘ The power to judge of the length and shortness, and of the sharpness and flatness of all sounds in speech, is placed by nature in the ear alone ’. This seems so obvious a truth, that the concurrent authorities of Cicero and Quintilian, which we find for it, should seem hardly ne-

‘ Omnium longitudinum & brevitatum in sonis, sicut acutarum graviumque vocum, judicium natura in auribus nostris collocavit. M. T. Cic. Orat. f. 51.

So Quintilian: Illa vero non nisi aure exiguntur, quæ fiunt per sonos. Inst. Or. l. 1, c. 5.

cessary

cessary to insure its immediate and universal reception; yet, from the practice of our schools and universities, tho the authority of those writers is generally held sufficiently high among them, it should seem that it is not there admitted. To know what syllables of the antient languages were esteemed long or short by the antients themselves, is held out as among the most important objects for the scholar. The claim even to speak ‘according to quantity,’ is very extensively asserted. But the explanation of what that claim means is not readily to be obtained, even in our universities. However that it does not extend to the expression of all differences by the voice, so that they may be sensible to the ear, and that it does not admit the judgement of the ear for deciding concerning the length and shortness of syllables spoken, is most readily obvious. Why certain syllables in the Greek and Latin languages, are intitled long, and certain others short, so that almost all are arranged under those two descriptions, might seem reserved as a cabalistical mystery, the reason of which is not to be challenged.

Nevertheless there have been eminent scholars, even eminent teachers in our schools and universities, who have not scrupled to declare all such claim of ‘speaking according to quantity’ absurd. Indeed were the claim never made, it could not surely be disgraceful to the modern scholar to be unable to express exactly the antient sound of the syllables



syllables of a dead language, whether for length or any other circumstance. Those at all versed in foreign living speeches well know how few, after childhood, acquire the exact manner of pronouncing any foreign language, tho' possessing every advantage of constant intercourse with those who speak it most perfectly. Among ourselves, it is notorious enough that the most unlettered and ignorant can discern and be ready enough to ridicule the deficiencies of a Frenchman's pronuntiation of English, who may have conversed many years among Englishmen. Why then is it necessary, and how can it be rational, to pretend to perfect pronuntiation of a language no longer to be known but from books?

Nevertheless it cannot but become the classical scholar to avail himself, as he best may, of the large information remaining from the Greek and Latin writers themselves, concerning the pronuntiation of their languages and the mechanism of their verse. Of that part of pronuntiation, therefore which depends upon articulation, it has been endeavored, in the pages immediately preceding, to give the best view that the scattered means remaining may enable us to gain. We proceed now to the other incidents of speech, which we find esteemed by the Greek and Latin writers most important to the Harmony of Language, namely Quantity and Accent.

In

In the Greek and Latin languages, we have observed, as in our own, the vowels were divided into long and short; the long having generally double the time or quantity of the short<sup>r</sup>. Of the Greek vowel-characters, two, η and ω, marked only long sounds, and two others, ε and ο, only short sounds; but the other long and short vowels were not distinguished in writing: nor in later ages were any of the Latin alphabet, tho in the time of the republic, combinations, such as are found in English orthography, were often used to indicate long vowel-sounds<sup>s</sup>.

Vowels being long and short, it follows of course that syllables must be long and short; nor were the rules of quantity, in the antient languages, different from those which we have observed to hold in our own, except that, with regard to written characters, they were more simple, inasmuch as the orthography was more regular. A long vowel, followed by a consonant, made a

<sup>r</sup> Longam (syllabam) esse duorum temporum, brevem unius, etiam pueri sciunt. Quintil. Inst. Or. l. 9, c. 4.

<sup>s</sup> Usque ad Accium, & ultra, porrectas syllabas geminis vocalibus scripserunt. Quintil. l. 1, c. 7. Thus, as Foster has observed, *cogo* was written *coago*, *libo* was *leibo*, and *dico deico*; *egi*, the preterit with the temporal augment from *ago*, preserved the *a* thus, *aegi*; and *edi* and *emi* from *edo* and *emo*, doubled the *e* thus *eedi*, *eemi*. Instances, as he remarks, are numerous in the *Leges regie* & *Decemvirales*, collected by Lipsius, and given also by Sylburgius.

long syllable ; a short vowel, followed by only one consonant made a short syllable : with two consonants following a short vowel, the syllable became long. In regard to vowels followed by vowels, the languages differed : in Greek such syllables were often still long ; in proper Latin words never. Long syllables, being not all composed alike, had small differences of length ; perceptible when carefully balanced, as had also short syllables<sup>1</sup> ; but for the purposes of rhythmus and poetical measure, the simple distinction into long and short, the long considered as double in time to the short, was esteemed sufficient.

From the rules, thus delivered to us, and from the practice of the poets, the measure of a very large proportion of the syllables of each language is with certainty known ; so that for the just expression of the quantity in pronuntiation, our difficulty is that, and that alone, which we find for the peculiarities in the pronuntiation of any living language not familiar to us, arising from want of habit in the organs. Nor is there anything else, in regard to quantity, of any consideration that has been in controversy among the modern learned<sup>2</sup>.

Not

<sup>1</sup> Dion. Hal. Struct. Or.

<sup>2</sup> Some Scottish writers, indeed, of great learning, particularly the lords of session, Kaimes and Monboddo, have imagined a something in antient verse evidently unknown to Dionysius, Cicero,



Not so with regard to ACCENT: it has been much disputed what the antient accent was. Nevertheless thus much we find abundantly and clearly and concurrently asserted by all the ablest antient writers, and they were singularly able men from whom we have the testimony, that accent was the TONE given to a syllable in pronuntiation. Nor indeed, however the fancies and prejudices of many of the modern learned, warm in the dispute about accent and quantity, may have led them to color and disguise this simple definition, has it been, I think, by any directly controverted. The three great questions have been, Whether accent is quantity? Whether accent makes quantity? and Whether the antient accent, however distinct from quantity, was not also very different from anything in the pronuntiation of the polite languages of modern Europe? After what has preceded, I cannot but hope I may be allowed to dismiss the two former questions; and so the third is what I shall proceed to consider.

We learn from concurrent authorities, of the highest class, that every word, equally of the

Cicero, and Quintilian; and a learned and ingenious Frenchman, of whom Mr. Payne Knight has taken just notice, has not feared to avow the fancy that he could teach Homer and all the Greek poets to write harmonious Greek verse. But the notions of these learned and ingenious men are so peculiar to themselves, not at all in common, but severally, that a serious attempt to refute them could only earn, as it could only deserve, ridicule.

Greek

Greek and the Latin language, monosyllables of course excepted, had one syllable offered to the ear more prominently, with a sharper tone, than the rest; small unimportant words only, sometimes, in the flow of sentences, losing the distinction<sup>▼</sup>. Here then, in the outset, we find exact accordance with what is obvious in four, at least, of the living languages of Europe, the Italian, the Spanish, the modern Greek, and the English; I believe I might add the Welsh, the German, and perhaps others: I know of no exception but for the French. In the four languages first mentioned, the accent is important, not only to the gracefulness of pronuntiation, but often to distinction of meaning. It is altogether so important, that dictionaries of those languages have it marked on every word not monosyllabical, as a matter essential to the accommodation of learners.

But we find that, in the Greek and Latin, the situation of the acute accent was determined by rules unknown to any modern language of western Europe. In regard to those rules, however, the two antient languages differed from each other, scarcely less than from those modern tongues. The rules for the Latin were remarkably simple; and they remain delivered to us on the highest authority, in the clearest terms<sup>\*</sup>. In dissyllabical

▼ Dion. Hal. de Struct. Or. l. 2. Cic. ad Brut. 18. Quintil. Inst. Or. l. 1, c. 5, &c.

\* Quintil. Inst. Or.

words, the first syllable always bore the acute. In polysyllables the place of the acute was determined by the quantity of the penultimate: if this was long, the acute rested on it; if short, then the antepenultimate, whether long or short, bore the acute. These rules, tho no living tongue of western Europe acknowledges them, are yet easy in application for modern voices, especially Italian and English; and accordingly all Italian and English scholars, in speaking with any care, pronounce in conformity to them. Thus far then we have nothing to lead us to believe that the accentuation of the Latin differed materially from that of most of the principal languages of modern Europe.

We learn then, from the same great authority, that the Greek rules differed from the Latin very materially: they were far less simple, and the accentuation, which had in consequence more variety, was, even to Roman ears, much more pleasing than their own. We have not however from the same, or from any equal authority, a complete account of the Greek rules of accentuation; the works of eminent men, who, in the best times, treated expressly on the subject, having been all lost: but, from the best times, we have numerous criticisms on the accentuation of particular words, in so many instances confirming the rules, delivered to us indeed only by late grammarians, but



professedly drawn by them from writers of the best ages, that the credit of those rules seems altogether abundantly established. In Grecian speech the accent was frequently, where in Latin it never occurred, on the last syllable; and, indifferently, on a long or a short last syllable. When not on the last, its place was generally determined by quantity; not, however, as in Latin, by the quantity of the penultimate, but generally by that of the last syllable: if this was long, the penultimate, whatever its quantity, had the acute; if short, then, with a few exceptions, the antepenultimate had the acute. Before the antepenultimate, equally in Greek and in Latin, the acute was denied a place.

In these rules, differing from anything obtaining in the western languages of modern Europe, there is however yet nothing in any manner or degree implying that the accent, in either of the antient learned languages, differed from what is found in the modern Greek, daughter of one, in the Italian and Spanish, daughters of the other, or in the English, which, tho composed in large proportion of scions from the Latin and its derivatives, is, in its stock, of another kind.

The antients acknowledged three different accents, acute, grave, and circumflex. Of these the acute is universally described as the eminent accent, admitting no equal within the same word;

and

and in this the antient and modern languages agree. A term was then wanting to distinguish collectively the syllables which had not the acute, or sharp accent, and the term adopted was Grave, analogous to our musical term Flat. The circumflex is described as a compound accent, formed of the sharp and flat combined in one syllable. The circumflex therefore could have existence only in a long syllable, and, of long syllables, only in those whose vowel was long. Containing the acute, it was always the principal accent of the word. For place it was confined, in Greek, to the last syllable and the penultimate; in Latin, equally with the simple acute, it was denied to the last syllable. Perhaps in most modern languages the circumflex exists, tho probably it was offered to the ear with more characteristical decision by antient, and especially by Grecian voices. The distinction of acute or sharp and grave or flat, for which the less correct terms accented and unaccented are often substituted, is obvious in perhaps all the languages of modern Europe, except the French, as essential to a just pronuntiation.

But it has been a favorite notion of some learned men, that the accents of poetry, oratory, and even common discourse, in antient Greece and Rome, in the politest ages, differed from anything in the polite pronuntiation of modern Europe, being strictly musical; so that all communication

by speech was in what we call recitative. If therefore anything remains like it in modern times, it is among the American savages, or, in Europe, among the most uneducated of the Cornish English, and perhaps some people in corners of the continent, remote from capitals. This notion, whatever character of whimsicalness it may bear, will require some consideration, on account, not only of the reputation of those who have maintained it, but of the high classical authority they claim in support of it, and moreover as the discussion may lead to considerable elucidation of our subject.

The authority relied on, as most pointedly to the purpose, is a passage of Dionysius of Halicarnassus. ‘The melody of common discourse,’ says that able writer, in his Treatise on Litterary Composition, ‘is comprized within the measure of (that interval of the Grecian musical system called) the *diapente*, never rising more than three tones and a hemitone, nor sinking more.’

When the Grecian musical system is more completely explained than it has yet been, we may perhaps be better enabled to judge how far the *diapente* may be a measure for the tones of common speech in modern languages. In the meantime all that I shall undertake immediately upon this passage to observe, is, that Dionysius speaks in it, not of the extent of tone that may have place in one word, but of what may be admitted



in a discourse; and I will own that I can gather from it little more than a general conclusion, to express which I will borrow a sentence from Terentianus Maurus: 'Grecian diligence,' says that writer, 'was singularly directed to the study of language, investigating its properties, and polishing it, even to the nail's end.' Should English diligence ever take a similar direction, whether the project of the ingenious Mr. Steele, for noting the tones of common discourse, may be perfected or no, those tones however might perhaps be again as familiarly treated of as they were formerly by the Greek writers, without necessity for explanation at every step, and without risk of being misunderstood.

But we have, in the former part of this inquiry, adverted to the natural and necessary analogy between the harmony of language and music. Speaking and singing are different operations of the same organs, producing different effects'.

\* The ingenious and learned anonymous author of a little tract, intitled the Art of delivering written Language, has observed, I think justly, that 'the essential and chief difference between the tones used in speaking and singing, lies in the latter being carried on by distinct intervals of some continuance, that will harmonize with other accompanying sounds; while the former is, in general, made up of such minute and evanescent variations and inflexions of voice (tho now and then leaping from one musical note to another considerably distant, p. 67.) as could not possibly have a place in any scale of practical music whatever.' Ch. 7, p. 69.

The antient writers on music and language never lost sight of either the analogy or the differences. Musical terms, and circumstances in music, continually offering themselves as convenient for describing or illustrating the harmony of language, were used by them freely: but the more carefully their works are studied, the more it will fully appear that they were always attentive to the differences of speech and music.

On the contrary, among the modern learned, among some, through want of considering the analogy between the tones of speech and music, and among many perhaps through a total want of musical knowledge, the very multiplication of terms, for the purpose of precision, has superinduced confusion. For, with us, what in music is called the Time, being in language called the Quantity, what in music is called a Note, being in language called an Accent, or sometimes a Tone; while the word Tone has in music a specific and well-known meaning, whereas, applied to language, its meaning is vague; learned men being then often unmusical, and musicians commonly unlearned, the notion has gained that different names, given to the same thing differently combined, mean different things, and not only the harmony of language has failed of that elucidation which can come only through a just consideration of its analogy with music, but mistakes have

have gained authority, and no small confusion has resulted.

The very learned Dr. Foster, to whose treatise, in defence of the Greek accents, with gratitude I acknowledge myself indebted for the first clew toward the unravelling, which I have attempted, of the harmony of language, has been by no means free from such mistakes. There is, in his learned work, one strange error, into which apparently he has been frightened by his opponents; perhaps indeed more an error of phrase than of opinion; but it is at the same time so adverse to his favorite and just purpose, and so obvious to detection, that, unless made and persevered in under the impression of alarm, it appears unaccountable. It relates to a passage of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, important enough to our subject of itself to require notice. ‘I know,’ says the doctor, ‘that Dionysius of Halicarnassus speaks of the contrariety of accents to meter on some occasions; and that passage hath been urged as affording an invincible and conclusive argument against the use of accents in general among the old Greeks. But if we consider this passage a little, we shall see how very unfairly it has been represented in relation to this subject. I allow then that Dionysius doth complain of accents as subversive of quantity on some occasions; but on what occasions? Why, when some unskilful composers of music,



‘music, they who set the Greek odes to  
 ‘music, did sometimes join a long syllable to a  
 ‘short note, an acuted one to a grave note, and  
 ‘vice versa; who made, as he there says, the  
 ‘words bend to the musical notes, and not the  
 ‘notes to the words.’

Now in truth there is not, in the passage referred to, nor in any other passage of Dionysius, one syllable about the contrariety of accents to meter, nor any kind or degree of complaint, expressed or implied, of accents as subversive of quantity; and it is very remarkable that the doctor’s own very just explanation relates to a very different thing; not the contrariety of accent to meter, not the subversion of quantity by accent, but the contrariety of some Greek vocal music to both quantity and accent, and the subversion of both by that music: music, apparently, not of an unskilful composer, as the doctor has supposed, but certainly of a composer who did not scruple to give effect to his own art at the expence of the poet’s art, to improve the musical melody by the subversion of the poetical.

The passage, well deserving attention from whoever may have curiosity for the subject, runs thus: ‘Music,’ says Dionysius, ‘instead of adapting  
 ‘notes to the words, assumes to itself to subject  
 ‘the words to its notes. Among numerous instances, the lyric verses addressed by Electra to the  
 ‘chorus,

‘ chorus, in Euripides’s tragedy of Orestes, will  
 ‘ furnish example :

Σῖγα, σῖγα, λευκὸν ἶχθυος ἀρβύλης  
 Τιθεῖτε, μὴ κτυπεῖτε.  
 Ἀποπρόβατ’ ἐκείσ’, ἀπόπροθοὶ κείτας.

‘ In this passage the words Σῖγα, σῖγα, λευκὸν are  
 ‘ all sung with the same note, tho each has, in  
 ‘ speech, a sharp and a flat syllable. The last syl-  
 ‘ lable of ἀρβύλης has the same note with the se-  
 ‘ cond, tho, in speech, two acute accents can no  
 ‘ how have place in the same word. In τιθεῖτε also  
 ‘ the first syllable has a lower note, and the two  
 ‘ others have the same higher note. In κτυπεῖτε  
 ‘ the expression of the circumflex is omitted, and  
 ‘ its syllable has the same note with a syllable not  
 ‘ bearing the same accent. Finally, in ἀποπρόβατε,  
 ‘ the acute note is not given to its proper syllable,  
 ‘ the third, but is transferred to the fourth.

‘ Similar licence may be seen in regard to quan-  
 ‘ tities. In speaking and reading, the quantities  
 ‘ of syllables are not violated or transposed, but  
 ‘ the proportion of length and shortness, prescribed  
 ‘ by nature or custom, is regularly observed. But  
 ‘ music, here lengthening, there shortening, will  
 ‘ sometimes even invert the just proportions, mak-  
 ‘ ing syllables conform to its times, instead of  
 ‘ adapting its times to the proper quantities of  
 ‘ syllables.’

Thus

Thus far Dionysius ; and as well surely might it be contended that he complains of quantity subverting accent, as of accent subverting quantity. But I will venture to say that in the extant writings, not of Dionysius only, but of all antiquity, there is not a syllable of complaint or declaration of the contrariety of accents to meter, or of the subversion of quantity by accent. Nor is the claim of extensive reading at all necessary to found the assertion ; for, if any such complaint or declaration existed, the learning, the diligence, the zeal of Dr. Foster's opponents would have long ago discovered, published, republished, and endlessly triumphed in it.

That against which alone Dionysius directs his complaint is music, and music that had evidently public favor in the Augustan age. He complains of it, in direct and clear terms, as taking liberties, which he could not approve, with accents as well as with quantities. This music nevertheless might not only in itself be fine, but, for anything said by the critic, it might accord admirably with the spirit of the poetry, tho it disturbed or even subverted the cadence and orthoëpical melody of the verse. It can hardly fail to strike the musical reader, and indeed deserves his notice, that, were Euripides's Greek out of sight, this passage of Dionysius, instead of a criticism of eighteen centuries standing, might seem originally intended for



an Italian opera, or an English oratorio, of the present day.

But a fact, transmitted to us on the high authority of Cicero, has been considered by some as clearly indicating, that the common pronuntiation of antient Rome, as well as that of Greece, was strictly and properly musical; and, however strange and even ridiculous it may appear to us, that the Roman orators certainly spoke from the rostra to the assembled people in regular recitative. For Caius Gracchus, as that greatest of those orators relates, used to be attended in the forum by a slave, with a flute or pitchpipe, whose office was to give the tone by which, in addressing the multitude, he should modulate his voice. Certainly such an attendant would make an awkward figure, might order allow his appearance, in our houses of parliament, or courts of justice; and the ridicule of the thing could not fail to overbear its use. But would it not probably have been so also in the senate-house at Rome? Even in the forum the practice appears to have been peculiar to one popular orator; or, at least, not ventured upon by his successors, in more polished times. Yet, if an orator in the Roman forum, surrounded and shielded by his partizans, might have recourse to it, and find it advantageous for preparing his voice to address thronging thousands in the open air, is it clear that it might not also be usefully adopted

by a candidate for popular favor, speaking from a scaffold in Palace-yard, or from the hustings in Covent-garden? There have indeed been instances in the house of commons, which may be remembered by many, of a fine deep manly voice, which has been universally pleasing, while kept within bounds, but when urged by passion to strain for impression, has risen to what in musical phrase might be called a feigned voice, squeaking, harsh and offensive. Possibly those who have observed such circumstances may be inclined to think that, even in the house of commons, could it be so used as to be heard only by the orator himself and those on the same bench, a pitchpipe might be sometimes advantageous.

It can scarcely be worth while to notice the story of the Athenian herb-woman and the philosopher from an Æolian colony, who valued himself upon having acquired the fine Attic pronuntiation. Is there a cockney or a west-country herb-woman in Covent-garden who would not at once distinguish an Irish or a Scottish or a Yorkshire philosopher by his accent?

I am therefore far from proposing to contend that, between the accentuation of the antient languages and of the modern, there were not shades of difference no longer now to be ascertained, or perhaps even imagined. Not only in the different modern nations, but in the different provinces of every

every extensive nation, differences of intonation, every body knows, are found. Yet it may I think safely be affirmed, that, taking the four modern languages before mentioned, the Italian, Spanish, modern Greek, and English, for example, the differences are not so great between the several languages, in polite conversation, as between the provincial dialects of every one of them among uncultivated persons. For testimony to this, appeal may be made to any acquainted with those languages, who have travelled the length of England, or little more than half the length of England, giving any attention to the speech of the country people. In going from the south, before the border of Yorkshire is reached, if their conversation is observed, at a distance where articulation is yet undistinguishable, their tones will assure the listening stranger that the dialect is new to him; inasmuch that he might suppose the language wholly different, when the words, put in writing, would be found precisely what he would himself use.

In Dionysius's treatise on literary composition\*, there has fallen from him, incidentally, a detail of the steps by which reading was taught among the Greeks: 'First,' he says, 'we learn the names of the letters; then their shapes and powers: thus we proceed to syllables, and all the

\* Dion. Hal. de Or. Struct. f. 25.



‘circumstances of syllables. After this we get to  
 ‘words, and whatever is incidental to words; as  
 ‘long quantities, short quantities, and accents.’  
 Here we find precisely the steps by which we learn  
 to read English, Spanish, Italian, and modern  
 Greek. Dionysius carries the detail no further,  
 his purpose having been merely to illustrate ano-  
 ther subject by this example: but we may easily  
 extend it, under the guidance of classical autho-  
 rity, and still find agreement between the old and  
 the modern languages. Thus, as the Greek  
 teacher must direct his pupil to make the just dif-  
 ference in pronuntiation between the long sound  
 of  $\omega$  in  $\beta\acute{\omega}\lambda\omicron\varsigma$  and the short sound of  $o$  in  $\beta\acute{o}\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ , so  
 the English teacher must require attention to the  
 similar difference between the long  $o$  in the first  
 syllable of *polar*, and the short  $o$  in the first of  
*polish*. The Greek teacher, before the accentual  
 marks became common in books, must of course  
 have informed his pupil that  $\alpha\lambda\lambda\alpha$ , meaning *but*,  
 and  $\alpha\lambda\lambda\alpha$ , meaning *others*, were written alike; that  
 he must therefore discover from the context which  
 word was intended, and then, in reading as in  
 speaking, he must be careful to distinguish it, by  
 giving the sharp accent to the last syllable in one  
 case,  $\alpha\lambda\lambda\grave{\alpha}$ <sup>2</sup>, and to the first in the other,  $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\alpha$ .  
 The

<sup>2</sup> In Greek manuscripts, as in modern printed dictionaries,  
 it was sufficient to mark the sharp syllable, and the tones of the  
 rest

The modern Italian teacher must inform his pupil of exactly the same distinction between *amo*, the first person of the present tense, meaning *I love*, and *amò*, the third of the passed tense, meaning *he loved*; and the Englishman must refer to precisely the same power of the accent alone, for distinguishing *présent*, the noun and the adjective, from the verb *présent*. But the French teacher will inform his pupil that his language is without accent. Marks indeed it uses, which, in other languages distinguish accents, but in French only direct articulation, or furnish distinction of words for the eye, which, for the ear, have none. This surely, to an Englishman or an Italian, must appear far stranger and more unintelligible, far wider of all analogy with circumstances in English or Italian speech, than anything to be found in Dionysius, Cicero, Quintilian, or any other antient writer concern-

rest would be known of course. The mark of the flat therefore, the line pointing upward toward the left, little wanted for its proper purpose, grew into use among transcribers, whether for any convenience, or through meer capricious fashion, to indicate the sharp accent whenever it fell on the last syllable of a word. That this mark, in that situation, is intended to indicate the sharp accent, and only the sharp, in all Greek manuscripts, is most satisfactorily proved by Doctor Foster, in his reply to Dr. Galley; and the practice of the modern Greeks, both in writing and in pronuntiation, exactly agrees with what he has shown to have been that of their predecessors.

ing

ing the accents of the Greek and Latin. The circumstances of French pronuntiation may perhaps come among matters of future inquiry. At present suffice it that nothing remaining in antient authors shows, or gives reason to imagine, that the accentuation of well-educated persons of the polite ages of Athens and antient Rome, differed so much, or so characteristically, from that of the well-educated of London, Florence, and Rome of the present day, as the accentuation of the people of the south of England from that of those of the north, in speaking the same English language:



## SECTION XI.

Of the Rhythmus or Cadence of the GREEK and LATIN  
LANGUAGES.

IF we are now truly acquainted with the nature and general qualities of accent and quantity, as they existed in Greek and Roman speech, without undertaking for precision in the just expression of them, we may proceed to inquire concerning Rhythmus or Cadence. What this was, among the antients, information remains to us so full, and of such authority, that the mistakes and doubts and differences about it, which have been entertained among the learned, seem attributable only to their want of leisure or inclination for the labor of analysis, necessary for a sufficiently accurate acquaintance with those elemental sounds of which rhythmus must be compounded.

Quintilian describes the antient RHYTHMUS, and explains its difference from METER thus, ‘ All composition, mensuration, and arrangement  
‘ of

• Omnis structura ac dimensio et copulatio vocum constat aut numeris (numeros ῥυθμὸς accipi volo) aut μέτρῳ, id est dimensione quadam. Quod etiam si constat utrumque pedibus, habet tamen simplicem differentiam. Nam rhythmī, id est numeri, spatio temporum constant: metra etiam ordine: ideoque alterum esse quantitatis videtur, alterum qualitatis. ῥυθμὸς

Q

aut

‘ of sounds, must depend either upon CADENCE ‘  
 ‘ or upon METER, which is but another name for  
 ‘ mensuration. Now tho both consist of feet, yet  
 ‘ have they a plain difference. RHYTHMUS, NUM-  
 ‘ BERS, cadence, or time-keeping, depend meerly  
 ‘ upon the space of certain portions of time; but  
 ‘ to constitute meter, a certain order of different  
 ‘ portions of time is requisite. To the former  
 ‘ therefore quantity of time only is necessary; to  
 ‘ the latter quality also. Rhythmus is either EVEN,  
 ‘ as in the dactyl, whose one long syllable is com-

aut par est, ut dactylus; unam enim syllabum parem (duobus)  
 brevis habet. Est quidem vis eadem et aliis pedibus, sed  
 nomen illud tenet. Longam esse duorum temporum, brevem  
 unius, etiam pueri sciunt. Aut fescuplex, ut pæon; cujus vis  
 est ex longa et tribus brevibus; quique ei contrarius, ex tribus  
 brevibus et longa, vel alio quoquo modo tempora tria ad duo  
 relata fescuplum faciunt: aut duplex, ut iambus; nam est ex  
 brevi et longa; quique est ei contrarius. Sunt hi et metrici  
 pedes; sed hoc interest, quod rhythmo indifferens est dac-  
 tylusne ille priores habeat breves, an sequentes: TEMPUS  
 ENIM SOLUM METITUR, UT A SUBLEVATIONE AD POSI-  
 TIONEM IISDEM SIT SPATIIS PEDEM; in versu pro dactylo  
 poni not poterit anapæstus vel spondeus; nec pæon eadem ra-  
 tione a brevibus incipiet ac desinet.—Sunt et illa discrimina,  
 quod rhythmis libera spatia, metris finita sunt: et his certæ  
 clausulæ; illi quo modo cœperant currunt usque ad μεταβολήν,  
 id est transitum in aliud genus rhythmī: et quod metrum in  
 verbis modo, rhythmus etiam in corporis motu est.

‘ Thus I venture to translate his word *numeri*, which, it ap-  
 pears, was not so in received use for his purpose, but that he  
 has thought necessary to add that he considered it as equivalent  
 to the Greek *ῥυθμοί*.

‘ mensurate

‘menfurate with its two short ones, (other feet  
 ‘equally fill the even cadence, but dactyl is the  
 ‘prevailing name, and every boy knows that a  
 ‘long syllable has two times, a short syllable  
 ‘one) or it is *SESCUPLE*, as in the *pæon*, com-  
 ‘posed of a long syllable and three short ones,  
 ‘or on the contrary, of three short and one long,  
 ‘or of three times added to two in any man-  
 ‘ner, so that the whole being divided into two  
 ‘parts, one may be half more than the other;  
 ‘or it is *DOUBLE*, as in the *Iambic*, composed of  
 ‘one short and one long syllable, or the reverse.  
 ‘These are metrical feet also. But this distinction  
 ‘is to be observed; that it is indifferent to rhyth-  
 ‘mus whether the two short syllables precede or  
 ‘follow the long one; the even or dactylic rhyth-  
 ‘mus will, in either case, be produced; for which  
 ‘it suffices that, when the time is duly measured,  
 ‘by alternately raising and dropping the hand or  
 ‘foot, each action mark an equal portion. But  
 ‘in verse an anapest or a spondee cannot always be  
 ‘substituted for a dactyl, nor is it indifferent  
 ‘whether a *pæon* begin or end with the short  
 ‘syllables. There are moreover these differences:  
 ‘space for rhythmus is unlimited: such as the  
 ‘rhythmus began, such it may go on to the  
 ‘μεταβολή; that is till a change to another rhyth-  
 ‘mus.’ (Thus it goes through a whole epic poem  
 unchanged.) ‘But space for measures is bounded:  
 ‘measures are dealt out in portions, (verses) con-



‘fined to certain limits. Moreover meter exists  
 ‘in words only, but *rhythmus* (time-keeping)  
 ‘may be equally exhibited in motion of the body’  
 (as in dance). Thus far the author’s meaning is perspicuous. What follows has been variously understood by commentators, and I apprehend rightly by none. Indeed there seems evident corruption from transcribers; and yet the sense so shines through the mist that it might be gathered perhaps very nearly. It is however less wanted for our purpose than what precedes; and a passage amended without authority could not have the desirable weight.

But however we might wish for more information, that contained in the passage which I have translated, is of very high value. With a distinctness, as if the able author foresaw the future want of explanation which, for his own time, might be nearly superfluous, he shows that the *rhythmus* of the Greeks and Latins had precisely the varieties of the common and triple time of modern music. Common time was called the even, and triple time the double *rhythmus*; the reason of which names will occur presently for observation. These times or cadences are essentially the same which we have remarked in English and modern Italian poetry, differing however in the proportions which each bears to the other, as well as in the manner of indicating those proportions. The measures of syllables having been carefully observed by  
 the

the antients so as to be made obvious to the ear in pronuntiation, one long and one short syllable sufficed to mark triple time; just as in music two notes, of which one is double the length of the other, marks triple time. But to give characteristical indication of common time, three syllables were necessary, one long and two short. Two long syllables might indeed fill the measure, and carry on indication of the character of cadence already impressed upon the ear; but syllables all of equal length can of themselves impress no character of cadence. On the contrary, in modern poetry (taking the character of Italian, Spanish, modern Greek and English for the general character of modern poetry) the instrumentality of accent being employed to assist the indication of cadence, and the comparative length of syllables being therefore less important, two syllables suffice to fill the even cadence, and thus two syllables have become its general measure; variety and character being supplied by accent. But with the modern negligence concerning proportionate length of syllables, two syllables cannot give characteristical indication of the triple cadence, even with the help of accent; three are necessary. Hence the modern even cadence bears to the triple the proportion of two to three, whereas the antient even cadence bore to the triple the proportion of four to three. To those ever so little versed in the modern nota-

tion of music, this may be readily explained thus: the modern even or common cadence bears to the triple the proportion of the musical time marked  $\frac{2}{4}$  to the musical time marked  $\frac{3}{4}$ : but the antient even cadence (*rhythmus par*) bore to the antient double cadence (*rhythmus duplex*) the same proportion which the musical time marked C bears to the musical time marked  $\frac{3}{4}$ , or which the musical time marked  $\frac{2}{4}$  bears to that marked  $\frac{3}{8}$ .

But we find that a third variety of time, called the fescuple cadence, analogous to a musical bar of five equal notes, was acknowledged by the accurate diligence of the antients, in their inquiries into the power of sounds in speech. This *rhythmus*, however, even among them, was esteemed little fit for poetry, but advantageous in prose. In modern poetry and modern music it is equally unknown.

But the measures of syllables, in proper pronuntiation among the antients, had not completely the precision of musical measures; for as we have before observed, neither all those arranged under the description of long syllables were exactly commensurate, nor all those arranged under the description of short syllables; and yet the differences neither of long syllables nor of short syllables were of any ascertained proportion, nor indeed of any proportion noticed in the structure of verse. These differences were minute; and yet, in frequent



quent occurrence they might in some degree derange a measure depending wholly upon the comparative length of syllables, and no way indicated by accent. It was probably in part to obviate this inconvenience, as well as to assist the less ready ear, that the antients had recourse to indication of another kind; they beat time to poetry as to music. But a single stroke would not suffice for marking the antient rhythmus. From Quintilian, still in the same passage, and from various passages of Terentianus Maurus and others, we learn that there was a double action, the *sublevatio* and the *positio*; more known by the Greek names *arsis* and *thesis*; the *raising* and the *dropping* of the hand or foot; each action marking its separate portion of the rhythmus. The even or dactylian rhythmus, analogous to our common time, was to be divided in halves; two times being given to the *arsis* and the same to the *thesis*; whence its name of *even*. To mark the double cadence, or triple time, either one time must be given to the *arsis* and two to the *thesis*, or two to the *arsis* and one to the *thesis*. Hence its name of *double*, tho it was precisely our triple time; the antient name being founded on the proportion of the two parts of the cadence, as divided by *arsis* and *thesis*; the modern on the number of times of the same length which it contained, namely three; the one long and one short time being equal to

three short times. The fescuple cadence had either two times in the arsis and three in the thesis, or three in the arsis and two in the thesis.

These antient cadences, marked by accurate measure of time, were superior to the modern cadences, by the variety they admitted, as well as by their regularity. The even rhythmus had three varieties of feet, the dactyl, the anapest, and the spondee; which were but various modes of filling and marking the one musical measure which we call common time. The double rhythmus had equal variety of feet, in the trochee, the Iambic, and the tribrachys; each severally filling and indicating the one musical measure which we call triple time. Some combinations of syllables, which obtained the name of feet, were but combinations of other feet, as the Ionic; or parts of other feet, as the Pyrrhic. The Pyrrhic, could not, of itself, fill a rhythmus\*. The two Ionics, together with the Molossus, made an important variety, forming a kind of double rhy-

\* The application of the Romans to Grecian literature seems to have put the Greek grammarians upon ascertaining distinctions for their Roman scholars, which, for their own people, less required attention. Dionysius professes to consider rhythmus and foot as equivalent terms; whence he speaks of the Pyrrhic foot by the name of the Pyrrhic rhythmus. The more diffuse explanation and greater care in distinction, which we find in Quintilian, assists greatly toward making Dionysius intelligible to the modern reader.

mus, that is, a rhythmus of double the time of that distinguished by the name of rhythmus duplex. This is perfectly analogous with what is ordinary in modern music. For taking the modern musical time indicated by the mark  $\frac{3}{4}$  as the time of the duplex or trochaic rhythmus, the time indicated by the mark  $\frac{1}{2}$  would be that of the Ionic; or if  $\frac{1}{4}$  marked the trochaic rhythmus,  $\frac{3}{2}$  would be the proper indication of the Ionic. Such being the changes that the antient poetical measures admitted, when we add the variety given by accent, not confined as in its modern office of marking the cadence, but changing its place through the syllables of the several feet, it will appear that, in the total of its variety, as well as in its regularity in accordance with musical time, the antient versification far excelled the modern.

Differing thus widely, in the indication of rhythmus and in the mechanism of verse, as the antient languages did from the modern, yet rhythmus itself is in both essentially the same, being no other than musical time. Tho this is otherwise sufficiently evident, yet testimony to it, from the greatest critic of antiquity, very direct testimony, however modern harmony was out of his view, will deserve notice. ‘Meter,’ says Longinus, ‘differs from rhythmus; for syllables are the material of meter, and without syllable can be no meter: but rhythmus may exist either in syllables, or without them, for strokes (as in beating a drum) suffice



‘fice to produce rhythmus.’<sup>f</sup> The perfect consonance of this short exposition of the difference between meter and rhythmus with Quintilian’s more diffuse explanation, which we have been noticing, cannot but be gratifying to the inquirer on these subjects; but the conclusion is particularly valuable, as it declares, in clear terms, the sense which that great critic had of the identity of rhythmus marked, as in the antient poetry, by quantities only, with rhythmus marked by the stroke of accent, which is the manner of modern poetry.

<sup>f</sup> Διαφέρει δὲ Μέτρον Ῥυθμῶν· ὅλη γὰρ τοῖς μέτροις ἡ συλλαβὴ, καὶ χωρὶς συλλαβῆς οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο Μέτρον. Ὁ δὲ Ῥυθμὸς γίνεται καὶ ἐν συλλαβαῖς, γίνεται δὲ καὶ χωρὶς συλλαβῆς· καὶ γὰρ ἐν κρότῳ. Longin. fragm.

## SECTION XII.

Loss of the **LATIN** as a **LIVING LANGUAGE** : Origin of the Disputes among the modern learned about the **ACCENT** and **QUANTITY** of the **LATIN LANGUAGE**.

**QUANTITY**, accent, and rhythmus or cadence, in the antient Greek and Latin languages, it thus appears, were the same as, in the principal languages of modern Europe, the French always excepted. But the **USE** of accent and quantity for versification, and the **INDICATION** of rhythmus or cadence, were very different ; quantity or measure of time, exhibited in the proper pronuntiation of syllables, having been alone the constituent of antient verse, whereas accent is called in so far to controul quantity, in modern verse, as to be itself the leading indicant of the measures.

But easy as it seems to conceive an arrangement of syllables of longer and shorter enuntiation, dividing time with musical exactness, so as to form poetical measures, yet for organs unpractised, as those of the modern Europeans, in accurate mensuration of syllables, and, on the contrary, habituated to depend upon the stroke of accent for indications of cadence, to carry the idea into practice is far indeed from easy. Incorrect practice thus has led to mistaken theory, and so arose those disputes about accent and quantity, in which the  
learned

learned of Europe have been for centuries engaged, without yet coming to complete agreement. Of these disputes therefore it may be necessary to take some short notice.

In those unhappy times called the middle ages, the Latin ceased to be a living language. In Italy, France, and Spain, more than in the rest of the Roman empire, it had been the common speech. When those extensive countries were finally subdued by the rude barbarians from the eastern regions, the conquered were not only the more numerous, but much the more informed part of the population. In the communication therefore which followed between the ruling and the subject people, the language of neither remained. Superior knowledge however so far prevailed over superior force, that the new speeches arising were composed in a very large proportion of Latin words; but, to accommodate the apprehension of the victors, curtailed of inflexion and simplified in phrase, and, to accommodate their organs often altered in form. Thus, in Rome itself, tho the speech was in words little changed, yet in phrase it became so new, that a Roman now scarcely learns the old language more readily than a German or a Russian.

Nevertheless the Latin, as far as it survived in books, remained always the language of the Roman church throughout Europe. Even in the darkest ages also there were always some lettered men among the clergy, who cultivated the Roman classical



fical learning, and, through the Latin language, could communicate among all the nations, among whom the rites of the Roman church prevailed. Lost however as a living speech, none could any longer with certainty teach the proper pronuntiation; and in the end the sounds of the Latin everywhere yielded to the vernacular utterance of the written syllables. Under these circumstances, that all just expression of the poetical harmony of the language must be lost, will not be doubted by those who have observed what becomes of English poetry in the mouth of the most learned Frenchman, with all the advantage of instruction from English voices, if practice, even from infancy, has not given effect to such instruction.

Meanwhile accent, the ruling power of harmony, such as harmony was, in the Teutonic, the former speech of the conquerors, gained ascendancy in the new languages; and in the Italian and Spanish, and southern French, formerly distinguished from the northern by the name of the Roman, Romanesk, or Romance language, it remains the ruling power. In the pronuntiation of Latin then, accent would acquire importance with the ear among all those people, as well as among the English, Germans, and others, whose language was fundamentally Teutonic. Accordingly the middle ages produced a kind of popular Latin verse, composed in accentual cadence without any regard to meter, and for ornament

ment adopting rime. But the more classical scholars, were enough aware that quantity and not accent had given the mechanism of classical poetry; and, tho means were totally wanting to learn the quantities of syllables by the ear, yet they gathered, with laborious diligence, the distinctions of long and short, and the rules of versification, indicated in classical writings; and, whenever they attempted composition in Latin verse, were careful to observe them.

The accentuation of the Latin language, as we have already seen, was extremely simple. In dissyllables the acute was confined strictly to one situation, by the rule denying it to the last; and in polysyllables it could vary its place only between the penultimate and the antepenultimate: on which of those it must rest, the quantity of the former decided. Now it happens that these very simple rules of accentuation, tho not exclusive rules for the Italian, Spanish, and English languages, which all allow greater variety, yet so accord with the general manner of those languages, that little more has been really wanting to direct Italian, Spanish, and English Scholars to the proper accentuation of Latin words, than to observe the quantity of the penultimate of polysyllables; insomuch that, while the acquisition of a just accentuation has little entered into the contemplation of modern teachers, they have fortuitously directed their pupils to it, by merely urging attention  
to

to quantity. The effect of attention so assiduously given to quantity, in our public seminaries, has been, that our scholars write Latin according to quantity, and pronounce it according to accent; that they EXPRESS justly the accents, and can NAME justly the quantities, but with all the attention, with all the drudgery that is required of our liberal youth in learning to name the quantities, yet the expression of them by the voice, and that judicial office which our great masters, Cicero and Quintilian, require of the ear, as far as it regards quantity, has been totally neglected.

These, however palpable truths, I might have some apprehension in declaring, if many men of the most approved learning, and particularly Mr. Harris, the author of *Hermes*, and doctor Foster, many years eminent among the teachers in our most flourishing classical seminary, had not fairly resigned, for the method of that seminary and of our scholars in general, the pretence to speak the antient languages according to quantity. Scarcely indeed a Latin verse can be found that may not afford irrefragable proof of the incorrectness of the approved English pronuntiation. The first lines of the *Æneid* will give abundance. Who will be found to defend the common and approved pronuntiation of the first syllable of *cano*? Does that pronuntiation give the short sound which the verse requires? or does it not make the syllable as long as any of the language, whose vowel is followed by only one consonant? If accent could affect quantity,



tity, has it not all the force of the acute accent added to its length? and finally, does the most approved modern pronuntiation make any difference, in point of quantity, between the first syllable of *cano*, which most confessedly ought to be short, and the first of *fato*, which, as assuredly ought to be of twice its length? How then can it be pretended that such pronuntiation is according to quantity?

But, it may be said, there is a harmony in Latin verse, as it is pronounced by Italian and English scholars, clearly distinguishing it from prose, and pleasing to the ear. True: but what is that harmony? Is it not obvious to every scholar of those nations, that false quantity may often be substituted for true, not only without offence, but even with gratification to the ear, and with offence only to the knowledge stored in the scholar's mind? Memory of written examples is what the modern scholar relies on; but pronuntiation, giving the quantities duly characterized to the ear, is what Cicero and Quintilian require.

The truth, let it not offend, is, that the harmony produced by Italian, and English scholars in their pronuntiation of Latin verse, however pleasing, is not harmony of quantity but harmony of accent; the verse, as they speak it, is not metrical, but, like their vernacular verse, accentual. A Latin hexameter is, in the pronuntiation of English scholars, not a verse, of six feet of the even rhythmus, and that rhythmus decided by  
simple

simple measure of time, or arrangement of quantities, but it is a verse of five feet of the triple rhythmus, and the rhythmus indicated by arrangement of accents. A hexameter verse, to please us, must have five strong accents: the three former whether on long or short syllables matters not: the two last must be on syllables long by rule. But the modern ear is careless about length of syllables in pronuntiation: the syllables on which the two last strong accents fall may be short in pronuntiation, without offence to the modern ear; which requires them on syllables long by rule, not through any regard for length of syllables, but because the antient rule of verse requires long syllables where the modern ear requires the two last strong accents.

Of antient verses none are more generally pleasing to the English and Italian ear than the Sapphic. The cause of this favor does not lie deep. The Sapphic is a verse of eleven syllables like the Italian epic, and the English dramatic pentameter; and, in the Latin Sapphic, the accents rarely fail to be so disposed as to mark very exactly the measure of those English and Italian verses. The two first lines of the first of Horace's odes in that measure, will suffice to show the exactness of the similitude:

Jam satis terris niviſ atque diræ  
Grandiniſ miſit pater, et rubente——

Let this auſpicious day be ever ſacred,  
Let it be kept for triumph and rejoicing.

R

Seldom

Seldom are found in it even the varieties of which the Italians are fond, and which Milton delighted in imitating: the accentuation is commonly confined with the strictness of English poets of the present day.

‘ Those, who have long flattered themselves with an opinion that, in their pronuntiation of Greek and Latin, they strictly adhered to right quantity, may probably be startled at the declaration of truths so adverse to their prepossessions.’ These are doctor Foster’s words; and I rejoice in being under the cover of that learned man’s shield when I find myself compelled to affirm, that the generally approved pronuntiation of English scholars is not guided by any consideration of quantity at all. It is notorious that if any English scholar were but to attempt, in speaking Latin, to make the difference of long and short syllables sensible to the ear, for instance, if the first syllables of *cano* and *fato*, the authority of Cicero would not save him; he would surely incur the imputation of affecting singularity.

But it may be worth while to observe how scrupulously, how importunately a just accentuation of Latin verse is demanded by our scholars: nor may it, for those who have given any attention to the disputes about accent and quantity, be unamusing to see how widely the accentuation, universally demanded, is at variance with the notion that the acute or strong accent is a long quantity,



or MAKES a long quantity, or necessarily COÏNCIDES with a long quantity. In Latin hexameter verse the modern ear requires that the acute or strong accent be confined strictly, in the fifth and sixth feet, to the first syllable, and is much disturbed to find it in any other situation. Observe the following :

*Æole, namque tibi divum pater atque hominum rex.*

*Æn. i. 69.*

*Exsultantque æstu latices ; furit intus aquæ vis.*

*vii. 464.*

*Consilium, et sævæ nutu Junonis eunt res.*

*vii. 592.*

*Quæ vigilanda viris ; vel eam ruit imbriferum ver.*

*Georg. i. 313.*

These, tho Virgil wrote them, the modern ear has difficulty to acknowledge for hexameter verses, on account of the dislocation (may we call it) of the accent in the fifth and sixth feet. A modern writer of Latin poetry would hardly dare to offer such. I remember meeting somewhere with a criticism on Horace's hexameters, in which it was boldly said that a modern schoolboy should be whipped for writing verses of such slovenly want of harmony. Yet how different the feelings of the same persons for the same antient measures in the Sapphic ! There the modern ear cannot bear the strong accent on the long syllable of the dactyl, where it frequently occurs in Greek verse, but rigidly requires it on the first of the short syllables,

where, to our great gratification, in Horace we almost constantly find it. The modern ear will hardly pardon even the numerosus Horatius an occasional deviation from this its rule, as in

*Quam jocus circumvolat et cupido.*

But in the pentameter a change of feeling comes again, and a different feeling for the different feet of that same verse. For, in the first dactyl of the second hemistich, we are disposed to allow the accent only to the long syllable, as in the last dactyl of the hexameter: In the last dactyl again we require a strong accent on the first syllable; but that does not content us; we must have another on the last, tho short; and then for the concluding syllable of the verse, tho long, to be accented is intolerable.

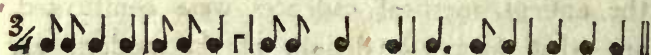
But indeed we are not more consistent through the hexameter. In the two last feet we fastidiously require the accent on the first syllable, but not so in any other foot of the verse. In the first line of the *Æneid* the accent on the first syllable of *cano*, the last of a dactyl, satisfies us very well; and, in the second line we are equally contented with the accent on the second syllable of *Italiam* and on the first of *profugus*, each the second of a dactyl; and all three short syllables. Indeed scarcely anything in recitation could be more offensive than the acute accent on the first syllable of every foot, except the repetition of it upon every long syllable.

It will be obvious that if accent was quantity, or made quantity, or if the acute or strong accent could only exist with a long quantity, these things could not be. The truth is that accent and quantity being perfectly distinct affections of syllables, and accent the ruling power of English, Italian, and perhaps most other modern European versification, accent is that to which the modern ear is disposed to defer, in attending to the recitation of any verse. In Latin verse, through the peculiar construction of the language, in the combination of the metrical cadences, there results a time-beating of accent, producing other cadences totally distinct from the metrical cadences. These accentual cadences then, without any regard to those proportions of time in syllables by which the antient metrical cadences were constituted, are what form the delight of the modern ear in Latin verse. With many indeed they have found favor as if they were the antient cadence, tho' doctor Foster, and others of the ablest scholars, have shown themselves enough aware of the contrary.



## APPENDIX TO THE TWELFTH SECTION.

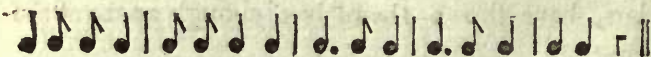
THE character of the measure of Latin hexameter and pentameter verse, in modern pronuntiation, may be exhibited more readily, and perhaps more clearly, by the following musical notation than by any words. It will not be supposed that I mean to attribute to modern voices, in the recitation of Latin verse, an exactness of time which they do not observe in the poetry of their own languages. It is the general character only of the measure that I mean to represent, and I think the representation so far faithful,



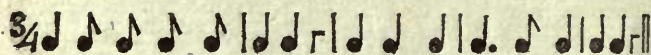
Tityre tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi Syl-



vestrem tenui musam meditaris a - vena.



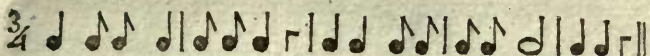
Nos patriam fugimus et dulcia linquimus arva



Arma virumque cano, Trojae qui primus ab oris.

The pentameter, tho somewhat differently filled, is, in modern recitation, precisely the same measure as the hexameter.

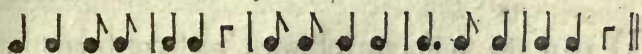
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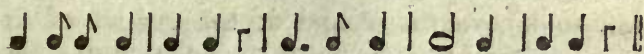
Hanc tua Pe-nelope lento tibi missit U - lixe,



Nil mihi re - scribas, tu tamen ipse veni



Troja jacet certe, Danais in-visa pu - ellis



Vix Priamus tanti to - taque Troja fuit.

It will be obvious that the triple time which modern voices give, in the recitation of antient verse of the even rhythmus, is not the triple cadence of English or Italian poetry, and still less is analogous to the antient rhythmus duplex: its proportion, both to the modern triple cadence and to the antient rhythmus duplex is as the triple time of modern musical notation  $\frac{3}{4}$  to the time  $\frac{3}{2}$ , or as the antient molossus to the iambus and trochee.

Some of our critics have spoken of the great importance of the PAUSE in the middle of the hexameter and pentameter verses. I do not recollect ever to have met with, or heard of any notice of it by any antient writer. The musical notation exhibits the cause of its importance in modern recitation: the measure could not be filled without it.

## SECTION XIII.

Of the Disputes about the ACCENT and QUANTITY of the  
GREEK LANGUAGE.

WITH the assistance of what we have been observing concerning the Latin language, it will be easy to discover the ground of the quarrel of so many modern scholars, with the whole system of Greek accentuation; as well with what has been transmitted of highest authority from classical times, as with the accentual marks, which, after the best Greek manuscripts, and in conformity with the rules transmitted by later grammarians on the authority of the elder, appear in our printed editions.

The Greek language was not, like the Latin, lost in the dark ages. Becoming the language of the court, and at length of the law, of the eastern empire, as it had for centuries been the most universal language of the people, it survived in living speech to modern ages; and not till the dawn of reviving learning had already begun to spread over western Europe, was in evil hour finally overwhelmed or dissipated by the flood of Turkish barbarism. A little before that lamentable catastrophe, those extraordinary patrons of letters and the arts, the Medicis of Florence, had begun to give vogue to Grecian literature within the pale  
of



of the Roman church ; where the quarrels between the two churches had before contributed to check its credit. Their munificence incouraged the wretched outcasts from Constantinople, who had talents and learning, to migrate into Italy, with what books they could carry ; and the splendid example was soon followed, tho not with equal steps, in some other parts. Thus, on the first rise of Grecian litterature in western Europe, its universities and capitals were supplied with masters the most polished as well as learned men of their day, who taught the Greek language as a living tongue. Hence it became over Europe, for a time, a fashionable language ; and hence the facility with which even ladies, for such we find reported as Grecian scholars of that age, may have acquired a proficiency in it, which has appeared to some learned men in modern times stupendous enough to ingage them to controvert its reality.

While those unfortunate outcasts lived, their instructions concerning the pronuntiation, as well as every other point of their language, appears to have been universally respected. But when they were gone, there could be no farther supply of such men from Grecian countries. Grecian speech remained to be taught, no longer, as before, by Grecian mouths, but, in Italy by Italian, in France by French, in Germany by German, in England by English. In each country of course  
it

it became tinged with the vernacular sounds and manner of utterance: for all experience shows that the perfect pronuntiatio of any language is to be acquired only in early youth, and to be upheld only by practice among those who speak it as their mother tongue.

Nevertheless we learn from that curious collection of letters which passed between John Cheke, professor of Greek in the University of Cambridge, and Stephen Gardiner, bishop of Winchester and chancellor of the University, that, to their time, the common pronuntiatio of the Greek language there, and indeed throughout Europe, as nearly as foreign voices could retain and transmit it, was the same which had been taught by the Greeks themselves, and the same nearly as that of the best educated of Constantinople and Athens at the present day. This pronuntiatio, which Cheke desired to alter, the bishop desired to preserve; and it seems as if innovation was favored by the zealous partizans of the protestant cause, because it was opposed by a popish bishop; as the correction of the calendar was refused throughout protestant Europe, because the truth was first brought forward under authority of the see of Rome. In the bishop's letters we find much dignity, with a just politeness and moderation in exerting his authority to maintain the established practice. In the professor's letters there is considerable eloquence, but much petulance, and no sound argument

gument to recommend the innovation for which he was intemperately earnest. But the bishop's violence in religious matters made him justly unpopular; and, with the downfall of popery, on the accession of queen Elizabeth, the professor's cause triumphed. Thenceforward whatever had been preserved of the articulation, which Grecian voices had taught, was to be denied to the Greek language; and its letters and combinations of letters were to have no other sounds than the custom of English speech assigned to those supposed the same, or equivalent letters, in English orthography.

But, in the dispute between the professor and the bishop, the articulation only of the vowels and diphthongs, was brought into question. The reverence for the accentual marks, which had been inculcated by the emigrating Greeks, remained unimpaired. Those last ramparts, which Grecian ingenuity had raised for the protection of the antient pronuntiation, were reserved for the assaults of scholars of a later age. Whether indeed the Greek restorers of Grecian learning in the west themselves expressed exactly the antient quantities of syllables, we are no way positively assured; but we know that in poetical composition they were justly attentive to them; and no complaint remains, from their age, of any deficiency of harmony in Greek verse, as they recited and taught to recite it, but on the contrary it found high favor wherever it became known. Of this indeed, whatever credit be given to the accounts of the proficiency of ladies in  
Greek



Greek literature, that it became among them a fashionable accomplishment is strong indication.

But with every generation of scholars, the deviations from the pronuntiation of the first teachers could not fail to increase; and the patronage which Cheke's innovation obtained, not in England only, but on the continent, could not but tend to extinguish the whole remaining effect of their instructions<sup>3</sup>.

Greek pronuntiation thus, in every country in Europe, was bent to the pronuntiation of that country; in Italy it became completely Italian, French, in France, in Germany, German, and English in England.

Those who have given any attention to living languages will not wonder that, in this state of things, Greek poetry should, in the pronuntiation of all the scholars of Europe, be no longer poetry; that its measures were corrupted, its cadence dissipated: the wonder would rather be were it not so. Let a moment's attention only be given to a few obvious circumstances. The people of England and the people of France, for above seven hundred years, have had constant intercourse, and much of the English language has been derived from a French dialect. Yet what a strange jargon do the peo-

<sup>3</sup> The correspondence between the professor and bishop Gardiner was printed at Basil in 1555, only thirteen years after the date of the bishop's edict which gave occasion to it.

ple of each make, in attempting the pronuntiation of the other, unless familiarized with it under the advantage of hearing it well spoken. Perhaps no Frenchman, after the age of twenty, with any advantage of practice, ever so acquired English pronuntiation that any English ear would be satisfied with his recitation of English poetry. The French and the Italian then are not only neighbouring, but sister languages; yet neither can an Italian relish French versification, nor a Frenchman, after the age of manhood, learn to express the just harmony of the Italian. Their reciprocal difficulties are far greater than an Englishman finds for Italian pronuntiation, or an Italian for English.

But an ingenious and learned Frenchman has furnished an example which perhaps may afford some useful admonition to our scholars. Mr. Girardin, at his estate of Ermenonville, has formed a garden, in some degree on the English model, and he has adorned it with inscriptions, after the example of Shenstone, one of which, dedicated to Shenstone himself, runs thus:

This plain stone  
To William Shenstone.  
In his writings he display'd  
A mind natural.  
At Leasowes he laid  
Arcadian greens rural.

I do not know Mr. Girardin: but I have known Frenchmen, to whom the English language

was

was, in books, nearly as familiar as their own; so familiar that they could translate an English book or newspaper into French almost as fast as they could read it, who yet in attempting what Mr. Girardin has attempted, would have failed at least equally. Mr. Girardin certainly supposed these lines not only English phrase but English verse. How completely they want all character of English verse, every Englishman, even the most unlearned, will feel. Can we then reasonably believe that modern compositions in Latin or Greek, whether for phrase, or for harmony, would sound better to old Roman or Athenian ears than Mr. Girardin's English lines to our own?

This however I mention for illustration only; our present subject being, not modern composition, but modern delivery of antient compositions. And here I am aware it may be urged that Latin poetry has, in modern recitation, a cadence and harmony generally pleasing to the modern ear. Be it or not the antient harmony, it is preferable to no harmony. But Greek poetry, as delivered by modern voices, using the Greek accentuation, is destitute of cadence; it is not distinguishable from the meereſt proſe; and however this may not be matter for reasonable wonder, it is matter for diſappointment; it is matter for diſſatisfaction and diſguſt. The principles of verſification and the ſtructure of verſe being then in  
both



both languages the same, the use of the Latin accentuation with Greek verse was an obvious resource; and trial being made, the result was likely to be in some degree gratifying; for cadence, such as modern recitation produces in Latin verse, would instantly follow.

Here then lies the source of the quarrel of so many lettered men of Italy, Germany, and England, with the Greek marks of accent; which has led them to overlook, to explain away, or, oftener, to consider as unintelligible, what remains concerning Greek accentuation, delivered from highest authority, in clearest terms, and in itself most consonant with the practice of modern speech. In Greek poetry, recited according to the Greek rules of accentuation, the modern voice continually falsifying the quantity, the modern ear too being unhabituated to cadence marked by quantity only, and the variety in the Greek accentuation giving no regular time-beating, like the Latin, the looseness of prose generally results: here and there only, as the accents take accidentally a regular order, any form of verse becoming sensible to the ear. But let the Latin rules of accentuation guide the reciter of Greek poetry, and it will have nearly, and generally, tho not completely and always, the same grace of cadence which modern voices give to the Latin. Under these circumstances it is not wonderful that some prejudice should grow against the Greek accentuation, and  
in

in favor of the Latin, so as even to obtain a partiality for the application of the Latin accentuation to the recitation of the Greek language.

In this state of things then what is to be done? Must we be contented to read Greek poetry as meer prose? Is not that amount of poetical harmony, which the Latin accentuation gives to Greek verse, different as it may be from the true antient harmony, preferable to no harmony? Call it a delusion, it is a pleasing delusion, which we shall be unwilling to give up, without some amends. Indeed if no amends could be proposed, I should be at some loss for an answer. But a very short examination will suffice to assure us that, even supposing it impossible for modern voices to express the antient harmony, and make it perceptible to modern ears, yet the total subversion of the Greek accentual system, and that complete substitution of the Latin system for the Greek tongue, changing wholly the character of the harmony of the language, is not only a wanton violence in prose, but needless, in the extent to which very modern usage has given sanction, for producing even the grace of accentual cadence in Greek verse.

Taking the *Iliad*, we need scarcely go beyond the third word for proof. In the first, *Μῆνιν*, the Greek and the Latin accentuation agree. For the second, *Ζεῖδε*, they differ: the Greek requires the acute on the first syllable, the Latin

on the second; and since Westminster has ceased to respect the Greek rule, the Latin has been the sole arbiter of the pronuntiation of our schools and universities. Yet what can in this instance justify it? Shall we still be told that the first syllable of the word, being the last of a dactyl, should be pronounced short, and therefore is incompatible with the strong accent, which, on the contrary, the second syllable requires, because it is long? How consistently with the practice of our schools and universities in other cases, where it is supported by the highest authority, this can be maintained, the following lines of Virgil may show:

Musa mihi causas memora, quo numine læso,  
Quidve dolens regina deum tot volvere casus.

Æn. i. 9.

Sæpe tener nostris ab ovilibus imbuet agnus.  
Ille meas errare boves, ut cernis, & ipsum.

Ecl. i.

Every scholar, gives the strong accent to the first syllables of *mihi*, *dolens*, *tener*, *meas*, all short syllables, each the last of a dactyl, and that dactyl the first foot of a hexameter verse; precisely the circumstances of the first syllable of *ἄειδε*, in the first line of the Iliad. The modern ear is perfectly satisfied with the effect on the harmony of the Latin lines. To what purpose then, deny the proper Greek accentuation to the Greek word? <sup>b</sup>

Let

<sup>b</sup> The following observation I owe to my learned and ingenious friend the poet laureat. A poem deprecating war might



Let us proceed to the next word, Θεῶν. Here again we find the Greek and Latin rules of accentuation differ; but, instead of the Greek contradicting, and the Latin supporting, as in the former case, the prejudice which considers the acute accent as compatible only with a long quantity, on the contrary, the Latin contradicts and the Greek coincides with it; for the Latin would give the acute to the first syllable, tho short, but the Greek assigns it to the last, which is long; and yet even here, directly against their own avowed principles, the modern custom of scholars refuses the Greek accentuation and will have the Latin. Clearly unnecessary, even upon their own principles, for any purpose of quantity, neither is this perversion of the Greek accentuation at all necessary for that accentual harmony, for which we have observed the mo-

adopt the first words of the Iliad, only dividing the word αἰεὶ, and thus making the sentence interrogative, thus:

Μητις αἰεὶ δὲ θεῶν Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλλεύῳ

Ουλομένην λέξεις;

In this case the modern fashion of scholars would give the acute accent to that very syllable in the combination αἰεὶ δὲ which the advocate for the accentual marks desires and cannot obtain allowance for in the single word composed of precisely the same syllables; and such pronuntiation will not at all offend the ear of any scholar of the modern fashion in this case, tho in the other it will be declared intolerable. Can it be the ear that is so inconsistent in its judgement? or is it not prejudice that takes away the power and even the will to judge by the ear?

dern ear to be so solicitous. For this also Virgil will answer :

Posthabita coluisse Samo : hic illius arma

Æn. I. v. 20.

Id metuens, veterisque memor Saturnia belli.

Æn. I. v. 27.

No modern ear objects to the flow of these verses, tho a strong accent falls on the first syllable of the third foot in each ; exactly the situation to which nevertheless the modern custom of scholars denies the strong accent to a long syllable in the first line of the Iliad for the purpose of giving it to the preceding short syllable, and thus, according to the tenets of many, making that syllable long. But the modern ear would object to the flow of these verses were the acute accent withheld from the first syllables of *Samo* and *memor*. Tho each the third syllable of a dactyl, the modern scholar is not ashamed to give them, with the acute accent, a really long quantity.

We might proceed to advert to the whimsical transposition of the accent, which modern custom demands, in the first word of the second line of the Iliad, *ὀυλομενην*, from one short syllable to another short syllable ; equally unrequired for the accentual harmony as for any other purpose of common sense. But whoever may have curiosity to carry on the inquiry may find endless proof of the uselessness of that violence with which the practice of the day makes the Greek language receive universally the Latin accentuation. How con-

trary the Roman practice was, Quintilian will tell:

‘ Sed accentus quoque, cum rigore quodam, tum  
 ‘ similitudine ipsa, minus fuaves habemus; quia  
 ‘ ultima syllaba nec acuta unquam excitatur, nec  
 ‘ in flexa circumducitur, sed in gravem, vel duas  
 ‘ graves cadit semper. Itaque tanto est sermo  
 ‘ Græcus Latino jucundior, ut nostri poetæ, quo-  
 ‘ ties dulce carmen esse voluerunt, illorum id no-  
 ‘ minibus exornent.’ Quintil. Inst. or. l. 12.

c. 10.

In the hexameter verse it is for the two last feet that the Greek accentuation is apt to be particularly offensive to the modern scholar’s ear. For the acute accent on the first syllable of each of those feet is essential to that accentual harmony with which, in Latin verse, the modern scholar is habitually delighted. If that disposition fails, hexameter verse will be, to the modern, or indeed, with the recitation of modern voices, to any ear, no verse. Now the Latin accentuation seldom fails to give this disposition, but the Greek often; to the no unreasonable dissatisfaction of those who find thence disappointment of an expected harmony, and no equivalent.

There was published, a few years ago, a treatise on the Prosodies of the Greek and Latin languages, with a dedication to lord Thurlow, said to be written by a prelate of distinguished learning. It contains the best investigation of the history of the Greek accentual marks, the fullest collection  
 of



of testimonies to the antiquity and extent of their use, and the completest refutation of objections to them as intended indications of that affection of common speech which we call accent, that have perhaps yet appeared. But, warm and able advocate as the author is for those valuable helps toward the just pronuntiation of the most harmonious language ever spoken by men, he has been unable to give up to his regard and reverence for them that accentual harmony which, in hexameter verse, by their situation in the two last feet, they often tend to confound and destroy. He has therefore imagined, with great ingenuity, a scheme of reconciliation, whereby the last foot of the hexameter verse, to which, for the accentual harmony, it is most indispensable, shall never fail of the acute accent, and the last but one, its next most important situation, rarely. For this scheme, which he confesses to be novel in appearance, the author claims support from Quintilian, who will however be found really to give him none. In all its extent the project would make dreadful confusion in Greek pronuntiation. Nevertheless, for the sake of that accentual harmony which it is calculated to preserve, I should be inclined to favor its reception for the last foot only of hexameter verse, to which alone, for that purpose, it is necessary, provided the better metrical harmony can no way be restored, or being restored, may be found too difficult of practice for modern voices, or too little

accommodated to the prejudices of modern ears. Unfortunately to detect what is out of order in a complex piece of machinery, and to repair it completely and restore every motion, are two very different affairs. But between these two there are other points; to show what the form of the machine was in its perfect state, and what its motions should be; for which I will not avoid the risk of offering the best help I can.

## SECTION VII.

Of Means for Approximation toward a just Expression of the  
Harmony of the GREEK and LATIN LANGUAGES.

APPARENTLY it can have been only through a want of all knowledge of music, or a neglect of all consideration of the analogies between music and speech, that those terms, so exactly corresponding in the two antient languages, and in each so plainly speaking their own meaning, *ᾠρσις* and *θεσις*, *sublevatio* and *positio*, can have been so strangely mistaken by some learned men, and passed for matter of inexplicable mystery with others. The *arsis* and *thesis* are clearly marked by Quintilian, Terentianus, and other antient writers, to have meant precisely *beating time*, and nothing else.

The antient TIME-BEATING, however, as we have already had occasion transiently to remark, was not precisely the same as the modern, but a more complex operation. The reason of this, and the reason of the use of time-beating, among the antients, in the recitation of verse, will be obvious in considering the nature of the metrical cadence. In modern music, we have observed, as in modern poetry, the cadence is marked by accent; and the even and triple cadences being never intermingled, single strokes regularly repeated, whether in coin-



cidence with the accented note, or to supply the place of an accented note, suffice for giving the time simply of either cadence; or the accented note, strongly marked for the ear, may alone suffice; the number and proportion of notes within the cadence deciding its character as even or double, that is, as common time or triple time. But in almost every kind of antient verse, except the epic and the anapestic, the two kinds of cadence are found intermingled; and it is largely implied in the writings of the antients, that in their music also the two times, common and triple, were mixed, to accommodate the poetical cadences.<sup>1</sup> It will be obvious then that neither the cadences of music, with bars of triple and common time intermingled, nor the cadences of poetry, with triple and even, or trochaic and dactylic feet intermingled, could be sufficiently indicated by any return of single strokes. Time simply beaten, with intervals varying in the proportions of four to three, would appear, to ears not practised with extraordinary assiduity in attention to such intervals, time falsely beaten. Indeed scarcely any ear, without assistance from regular divisions of parts of such intervals, could assure itself of the exactness of their proportions, or even discover any distinguishing character in each. Syllables, pronounced

<sup>1</sup> If I remember right, Dr. Burney, in his musical travels, mentions modern music which he somewhere found, of no unpleasant effect, having the two times intermixed.

in just measure, would show the proportions and mark the character; but if, for ascertaining the measure given by the syllables or for directing the measure to be given, assistance were wanted from time-beating, it must be other time-beating than the simple stroke of the modern musician.

Hence then the invention of the **DOUBLE TIME-BEATING**, the **ARSIS** and **THESIS**, **RAISING** and **DROPPING**. This double action divided the cadence into two parts, bearing certain proportions to each other. For the dactylic rhythmus, the even cadence or common time, the raising and dropping were performed in equal time, and they proved the justness with which the reciter made the single long syllable of the dactyl or anapest balance the two short ones. For the trochaic or iambic rhythmus, the triple cadence or triple time, the arsis and thesis were to each other in the proportion of two to one: for the trochaic foot the arsis was double the time of the thesis; for the iambic foot, the thesis was double the time of the arsis. These operations themselves, and their purposes, and the familiarity of the use of them among the antients, are so clearly indicated by the antient writers on meter, that there seems no room for doubt, no possibility of mistake about them.

Now should it be an object for any modern scholar to express, in any degree, the just harmony of the metrical cadences of the antient languages, or even to conceive with any clearness their effect,

he

he must not, I apprehend, refuse that labor which the antients did not refuse ; he must learn to mark the time while he reads, by the antient method of double beating, the arsis and thesis. Nor must it be expected that the amount of exercise which might have inabled an antient Roman to keep time in reading Greek verse, will suffice to inable the modern to keep time in either Greek or Latin. For the Roman found in Greek a disposition of accents indeed different from that of his own language, but no different indications of cadence ; whereas the modern is habituated to indications different from the antient, and to impressions from them of a kind to obviate or disturb the perception of the antient indications of cadence. The practice therefore of the antient time-beating will be likely to be found difficult enough at first to be irksome ; and it must be perseveringly pursued to be effectual. For the distribution of time to the syllables, with due exactness, will not be the only, nor perhaps the greatest difficulty. Another, of amount scarcely to be imagined without trial, will arise from the accents ; which must be carefully preserved to their proper syllables, while the stroke indicating the cadence falls on other syllables. But from the habit of the modern ear to pay deference to accent as the mark of cadence, accent being itself the time-beater of modern poetry, a perplexity arises, of a most teasing kind, till habit may have overcome it. The difficulty has a near analogy to  
that



that of the children's trick of tapping with one hand while they rub with the other. Tho each action is so easy by itself, with either or with both hands, yet, in first attempting the two together, each hand is so disturbed by the contrary motion of the other, as to be unable to effect its own intended motion.

For the recitation of Greek and Latin poetry to time beaten, perhaps the difficulty would be nearly equal for all the western Europeans; unless the French might have a greater facility for the quantities, through their deficiency for accent: they would not be disturbed by accent which they do not express, and to which, in the verse of their own language, they are not habituated to attribute any importance,

For simply pronouncing at the same time according to quantity and accent, the habit of English speech gives advantages, even over the Italian. In English, numerous grave syllables, variously situated in regard to the acuted syllable of the word, are long by duplication of consonant-sounds, and some few have long vowels; whence arises, for English voices, facility for expressing the same thing in the antient languages: whereas a very small proportion of grave syllables, even of the former description, is long in Italian, none of them ever following an acuted syllable, and I believe the language has not one long vowel, clearly and necessarily long, without the acute accent.

The

The English, in variety approaches the Greek: the Italian is still more confined than the Latin: for tho neither Latin nor Italian can have a long penultimate following an acuted antepenultimate, such as are found in *αἰδεῖ, ἔθηκε, μάχεσθαι*, *crüēlty, hónēstly, súnrīsing*, yet, in the Latin, long vowels unacuted are numerous.

But on the other hand there are difficulties for English scholars, peculiar to themselves, arising not from deficiency in pronuntiation, but from the irregularities of English orthography; by which they have been led insensibly to a kind of systematical irregularity in their pronuntiation of the learned languages, by no means favorable to correctness in point of quantity.

Notwithstanding the avowed and universal opinion of the most learned throughout Europe that, since the revival of learning, the harmony of antient poetry has everywhere been deficiently expressed and deficiently understood, notwithstanding numerous publications on the subject show the opinion extensive that improvement is possible and desirable, and notwithstanding my clear conviction that to regulate the recitation of antient poetry by the practice of time-beating, is plainly pointed out by the most authoritative antient writers as what must be indispensable for modern voices, as it was advantageous, if not absolutely necessary to the antient, I am still not without apprehension

prehesion of alarm to some scholars and even of disgust to some, from the proposal of a practice, however old itself, to them so novel. I am nevertheless yet more apprehensive that English scholars, many, or perhaps most, of the most learned of them little acquainted with any living language but their own, and wholly unpractised in any other pronuntiation, may be likely to take still greater offence at opinions involving condemnation of that manner of articulating the learned languages to which they have been habituated, and at any proposal of a considerable change. So much however my subject has led me unavoidably to say, that to those, if any there are, disposed to give me any credit, the question cannot fail to occur, ‘ If we are truly so wrong, what must we do to be right?’ To which I must answer, as before, to discover what is wrong, and to mend it, are two things, but I will not withhold such help as I may best give.

We are often totally unaware of peculiarities in ourselves which to others are striking; and this being true of nations as of individuals, I could perhaps no other way so well give the information which it is my purpose to communicate, as by relating what follows. Being some years ago at Rome, in company with a man of letters of that city, he desired me to repeat the beginning of the *Æneid* in the English way. He had  
heard



heard of some of the peculiarities of English orthography ; that *a* represents with us the sound of the Italian *e*, and *e* that of the Italian *i*, but he was uninformed of its irregularities. I had therefore scarcely finished the second line, when he interrupted me : ‘ *Arma, oris, Italiam, bene ; mà perchè poi cheno, praimus, feto, prafugus ?* ’ that is, why pronounce vowels in *cano, primus, fato, profugus*, differently from the same letters in *arma, oris, Italiam*, where every English scholar gives them nearly the Italian enunciation. This question he put, not at all surprized that I spoke the four words, with which he was dissatisfied, differently from the Italians, but that I pronounced the other three so nearly in the Italian manner. I answered that, in our own language those letters represented different sounds, as they were differently combined ; and from habit we used the same variations of articulation in speaking Latin. ‘ For your own language well,’ he replied ; ‘ but why so confound the pronunciation of Latin ? ’ I could not help answering that, to confess fairly, it was not well, even in our own language ; which was in truth disgraced by gross and absurd irregularities of orthography ; and it was in our blindness to the deformity of these, arising from over familiarity, that we were led by them to perplex the sounds of the Latin.

Indeed I believe none, who will consider the matter, can remain so prejudiced as not to allow the  
justness

justness of the aged Roman's objections, for he was a very old man, to that confusion of the vowels, which, on ever so little consideration, cannot fail to be striking in the established pronuntiation of Latin among English scholars. But that confusion, which perplexes and offends foreign, without any disturbance to English ears, familiarized to it, is far from being all the evil. Our present pronuntiation of the Latin vowels, giving them different sounds as they are differently combined, according to the rule or custom of our own language, is often completely repugnant to the just quantities of Latin syllables. Some remarkable instances occur in the two first lines of the *Æneid*; for as the three first words of the *Iliad* sufficed for pregnant example of the improprieties of our Greek pronuntiation, so we need hardly go beyond the two first lines of the *Æneid* for examples to the same purpose in Latin. In the second word of the first line, *virumque*, the practice of English scholars gives the English diphthongal sound of *i* to a short syllable. In the nature of things that sound cannot be so contracted as to make the syllable otherwise than of the long proportion; so that, without a change of articulation, the quantity of the syllable is unavoidably falsified. But, in the first word of the second line, *Italiam*, the custom of scholars gives another sound, and that as short as any vowel-sound in English pronuntiation, to the same vowel-character, where it represents a long sound; so that here again the  
quantity

quantity is violated in a contrary direction. This perversion cannot but deserve attention, in all its circumstances, from those who either claim or desire to speak truly according to quantity. Both the syllables in question are grave; both are followed by acuted syllables; accent is therefore no necessary to difference of sound tending to either true or false quantity; but the *i* in *virumque*, which ought to be short, is pronounced as a diphthong, and so made long; while the *I* at the beginning of *Italiam*, which ought to be long, receives another, and that as short a sound as any vowel within the compass of English pronunciation. Nor will the present custom of scholars allow the changes necessary for the expression of the just quantity in each word: otherwise the practice were abundantly easy; for nothing more is wanting than an interchange of sounds between the two words; the *i* in *virumque* should have the same short sound as in *Italiam* or *viridum*; and the *i* in the first syllable of *Italiam* might be duly lengthened, by receiving the sound of the same letter in the same situation, in the English words *idea*, *identity*, *idolatry*, being the same which it commonly receives from English voices pronouncing ill the Latin word *virumque*.

Again in the word *cano*, none can deny that the practice of English scholars gives as long a sound to the first syllable as to the first of *fato*, or to any syllable of the language, in which a vowel is followed



lowed by only one consonant. It cannot be necessary to cite more instances.

If then it be asked, how are these improprieties to be remedied? I should without hesitation say, best and very easily and readily by adopting at once the modern Roman articulation of Latin: best, both because in the simplest way, and because in the way most likely to be nearest to the antient articulation; easily and readily, because modern Roman articulation has nothing considerably different from what is found in the compass of English speech. Were the Roman articulation adopted, it would be no longer in question what sound should be given to the *i* of *virum* that it may be short, or what to the same vowel in the first syllable of *Italiam* that it may be long; for Roman pronuntiation has but one mode of articulating that vowel, which may be either shortened or lengthened at pleasure. There would be as little doubt how the first syllable of *cano*, should be reduced to its proper shortness. It would be pronounced nearly as English scholars always pronounce the same syllable, in what may be almost called the same word, *canimus*. Nor would the absurd objection be made, that so it is pronounced as if two consonants followed the vowel; for the just distinction would be learnt, from Roman pronuntiation, between a consonant articulated, and a consonant merely written. It is not however meant to be asserted that the practice of modern

Roman scholars, in pronouncing Latin, is correct in point of quantity; but whereas the ordinary English pronuntiation of the vowels, in their several combinations with consonants, not necessarily denying correctness with regard to quantity in speaking Latin, throws however difficulties in the way of such correctness, the modern Roman pronuntiation on the contrary gives, even for English voices, all facility for it.

I have much more difficulty to say how our present most vicious pronuntiation of the Greek language may best be improved. Among the Tuscans and Romans of this day the same characters seem to represent the same vowels as with their forefathers, when the Latin language was in full vigor. But with the Greek, as we have already had occasion to observe, it is far otherwise. The pronuntiation of the Greeks of the present day evidently enough differs, in regard to some of the vowels, from that which remains described by Dionysius. Nevertheless, those particular vices excepted, which may be traced growing through centuries, there seems no reasonable ground for doubting that the present polite pronuntiation of Constantinople, and perhaps of Athens, approaches nearer to the speech of the antient Greeks than that of any other moderns, with any advantages that study can give. We have complete assurance that the classical Greek remained the language of the Constantinopolitan court till the final overthrow

throw of the empire, in the reign of our Henry the seventh, and that its grammar and syntax were preserved to that time in great purity<sup>k</sup>. It is against all reason then to suppose that a people so successfully careful of their language, in those points, would have been negligent of the pronunciation; and it will be against all experience, we may say against the knowledge of all who have any experience in living language, to imagine that they would not speak their own language better, more in the way of their ancestors, than foreigners, with whatsoever advantages of learning and study. Since the final overthrow of the Greek empire, indeed, literature has been at a low ebb in Constantinople; but what disposition and opportunities existed for study, have been directed with fond predilection to the old language; the careful cultivation of which has never ceased. The old lan-

<sup>k</sup> For this the authorities quoted by Mr. Gibbon, and Mr. Roscoe, as well as those collected by Dr. Foster, and by the right reverend author of the Treatise on the Prosodies of the Greek and Latin languages, may be consulted. ‘Anna Comnena,’ says Gibbon, ‘may boast of her Attic style (τὸ Ἑλληνίζειν ἐς ἄκρον ἐσπουδακύναι) and Zonaras, her contemporary, but not her flatterer, may add with truth γλῶτταν εἶχεν ἀκριβοῦς Ἀττικίζουσαν.’ c. 53. n. iii. v. 5. Anna Comnena flourished in the beginning of the twelfth century. Gibbon praises Pachymer, who flourished in the end of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth, John Cantacuzene, and Nicephorus Gregoras, who followed him, and Laonicus Chalcondyles, and Ducas, who wrote after the fall of the empire.



guage has always been, and remains the language of the church : it has always had its professors and teachers : it is still considered, by all who pretend to learning among the Greeks, as their proper tongue. The vulgar corrupted speech, tho less altered from the classical than the Italian from the Latin, they hold in little esteem : they must of necessity speak it, but the antient is that in which they generally prefer to write. Nor has their love and care for that unrivalled language been unsuccessful. I am inclined to suspect that the disposition which has appeared, through western Europe, to speak of modern Greek learning with contempt, has had its origin from the quarrel between the Greek and Roman churches, and its prevalence from prejudice derived from the Roman clergy. For myself, I think it justice to a race too long held undeservedly cheap in western Europe, to bear that testimony which I may in their favor. I have met with few scholars of any other country who had the amount of grammatical and critical learning in the Greek language which I have found in a Greek, and I never met with any who had the same feeling of the language. What I mean by feeling, is that perception of meaning, independent of reasoning, and often incommunicable by direct instruction, through which, for example, English children of five years old never mistake the difference between *shall* and *will*, which learned doctors of Paris and

even.

even of Edinborough and Dublin, cannot be taught to comprehend. It has been in the want of this power of feeling that some of our learned have supposed the Greek aorist sometimes to bear the meaning of a future; that none perceive the distinct import of the present and aorist participles; and that we are told the aorist tense of the verb is more used by the Greek historians, the preterperfect by the orators, without a syllable to instruct us why; tho perhaps the analogy to explain it to the English scholar is ready in our common speech. I will venture then to declare my opinion that, as to approach the nearest that may be to the true pronuntiation of the Latin language, the first thing to be done is to adopt the Roman articulation, so to attain a similar approximation to that of the Greek, we can do no other way so well as to adopt the Constantinopolitan.

One cannot without wonder observe the deficient discrimination, the apparently careless inaccuracy of some learned and otherwise discerning modern critics, in treating of the sounds of speech. To animadvert on all the remarkable instances that may be found, were almost endless. I will select a very remarkable one from among those that may best assist to illustrate the just distinction of sounds in antient and in modern languages.

In the thirty-seventh of the essays with the title of sir Thomas Fitzosborn's letters, by that elegant scholar the late Mr. Melmoth, is the fol-

lowing passage : ‘ Most certain it is that the delicacy of the antients, with respect to numbers, was far superior to anything that modern taste can pretend to, and that they discovered differences which are to us absolutely imperceptible. To mention only one remarkable instance : a very antient writer has observed upon the following verse in Virgil,

Arma virumque cano Trojæ qui primus ab oris,

‘ that if, instead of *primus* we were to pronounce it *primis* (*is* being long and *us* short) the intire harmony of the line would be destroyed. But whose ear is now so exquisitely sensible as to perceive the distinction between those two quantities ?’

To this question the proper answer seems obvious ; no ear, now or ever, could perceive any distinction, as the words are spoken by English scholars ; for, before a distinction can be perceived by the ear, it must be made by the voice, and the pronuntiation of English scholars makes none. But, in antient pronuntiation, we have sufficient assurance, the difference between a long and a short syllable was not minute, and perceptible only to ears of exquisite sensibility : the time of one was double the time of the other ; the distinction was great and striking ; and for its purpose of deciding the march of cadence in popular poetry it must be so. Evidently then the question should have been, not ‘ whose ear can perceive the distinction ?’



‘ distinction ?’ but ‘ how should the voice make the ‘ distinction ?’ When really made, as the antients made it, proportioning the times as two to one, the ear must be dull indeed that could not perceive it.

Nor is anything out of the way of common English pronuntiation necessary to illustrate the distinction by example. The awkwardness for explaining such points will be found, not in our speech, but in our orthography. The word *primus* we pronounce, as to the quantities, properly ; making the first syllable long, the second short ; but for the word *primis* the common pronuntiation of English scholars is clearly false ; for the last syllable, which should be long, they make short, as in *primus*. The proper length however may be given without going at all beyond the ordinary bounds of English pronuntiation, and it may be done in two ways ; either by using the common long sound of *i*, as in *sunrise, exile* ; or, more properly, by extending the common short sound of *i*, of which sound, when long, we have observed, in our orthography, *ee* is the proper, and *ea* a common representative. That sound, not very frequently occurring in our language without the strong accent, is nevertheless familiar enough ; as in the words *increase, decrease* (the nouns, distinguished by accent from the verbs) *heartsease, colleague, sweetmeat, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen*, and so forth ; *portreeve, wellmeaning, illmeaning*, and others.

Thus, with a mode of pronuntiation obvious and familiar to English voices, every syllable of the Greek and Latin languages might have its distinguishing quantity, abundantly made perceptible to every ear of moderate sensibility ; nothing preventing but the custom of English scholars. But the manner in which sounds are now applied to the vowel-characters of those languages, is curious enough (might I be allowed to speak plain truth I should say perverse enough) to deserve a little farther animadversion. Wherever we meet with those of the Greek long vowels which are distinguished by their appropriate characters, as in *ἡρως*, we are very properly forbidden, in any circumstances, to change the pronuntiation. But for the same word in Latin we are not to use the same sound of the *o*. This is to be still indeed long, but the articulation is to be that whose appropriate representative in English orthography is the combination *au*, the same which we give to the same combination whenever it occurs in Latin, as in *laus*. Authority for such change is certainly to be found only in the custom of English scholars. But it should be farther observed that the preservation of the quantity in this pronuntiation of *o* is purely accidental. It so happens that, before *s* and *st*, *o* has commonly a long sound in English, tho not always the same long sound ; and it is a whimsical kind of regularity with which we carry the same variety to the pronuntiation of Latin.

The

The English word *mos*, is pronounced as if written *maufs*, and so we speak the Latin word *mos* as if it were written *maufs*. But the English word *post* we pronounce as if it were written *poast*<sup>1</sup>; and so in the Latin word *post* the *o* is not to have the same sound as in the Latin word *mos*, but the same as in the English word *post*, which happens to be the more proper way for the Latin, tho, for the English, it comes under an exception rather than a rule.

One instance more of the extreme incorrectness, in point of quantity, of the approved pronuntiation of Latin among English scholars, I wish to notice, because it is so familiar, and of a kind to be striking. The difference in the proper quantity of the first syllable of *pater* and the first of *mater* is abundantly known: but in the pronuntiation of English scholars no difference is made. And why so? It might seem they were resolved to confine the doctrine of quantity as something mysterious or cabalistical, to be locked up in the mind and forbidden in practice. Why else refuse to the Latin those differences which are familiar in English pronuntiation; in which the first syllables of *fatbom*, *fallow*, *gather*, *mother*, *many*, *very*, *blossom*, are short, and the first of *father*, *falling*, *rather*, *frothy*, *Mary*, *vary*, *losses*, are long.

<sup>1</sup> It will be recollected that we take the combination *oa*, as the proper representative, in English orthography, of the sixth long vowel. Sect. II. of this Inquiry.



To conclude then our observations on the pronunciation of the Greek and Latin languages. Whether we pronounce *a* with a broader or narrower sound, whether we speak *c* and *j* in the Italian or the English manner, matters not for the quantity of the syllables, or any essential of poetical harmony. What is really wanting for English scholars, to obviate the grossest violation, the reversal often of just quantity, is, first, to give distinctly the proper proportionate length of sound to every vowel, and, secondly, where iterated consonants occur, to articulate them in the Italian way (a mode, as we have observed, not alien to our speech) as distinct letters. Apparently *z*, equally in Latin and in Greek, should also be pronounced in the Italian way, to make it effectually a double consonant. *X* is, in our own speech, commonly double. For any other letters, it is for simplicity sake and convenience, principally, that I would recommend, for the Latin language, the modern Roman articulation, and, for the Greek, the Constantinopolitan or Athenian. To approach then toward any just expression of the harmony and character of the languages, in poetry or in prose, each of them must have its own proper accentuation, as we may best gather it; and the information remaining is large. That of the Latin, now in use among English scholars, should be preserved, and the Greek must have its own restored. But, in verse especially, even Latin verse, I apprehend it

must be vain to think of managing the just expression of quantities, and preserving at the same time the proper accentuation, without the assistance of that resource which the antients themselves, at least the Romans used, the arsis and thesis, or double time-beating. Thus we might approach the nearest, I imagine, that may now be possible, to a just expression of the harmony, in poetry and in prose, of those languages which, with all the vices of our present pronuntiation of them, we most justly admire, and to the acquisition of which we dedicate, with no small pain to ingenuous youth, so large a portion of the most precious season of education. To rising youth the additional acquisition of a pronuntiation approximating justness, were living examples before them, would cost little or nothing. The difficulty were to find the first examples, and obtain credit for them.

## SECTION XV.

Of the Principles of HARMONY and MECHANISM of VERSE  
in some modern Languages.

## ARTICLE I.

*Of the French Language.*

THE FRENCH Language, as it has now stood for more than a century, is the most improved, and, through diligent and able cultivation, the most advantageously exhibited, of any of modern Europe; being yet essentially, in words, in texture, and in harmony, the poorest perhaps in which letters were ever cultivated.

The French is remarkable among languages, and not least among those of modern Europe, for its want of accent. ‘*Pour bien parler François il ne faut point avoir d’accent,*’ is a rule universally held among French grammarians. By this cannot be meant that all French syllables are to be pronounced with the same tone. Whoever has heard the language properly spoken must be aware that it is otherwise. But that no syllable of any French word is regularly and constantly intitled to any eminence of tone, the French critics are so agreed



agreed that it seems undisputable. They are equally agreed, not that there is no difference in the times or quantities of syllables, but that no regular proportion of time or quantity belongs to the syllables of the French language; no such difference that the regularity of the proportions may be obvious to the ear. Wanting such regularity, quantity cannot be the constituent of any cadence or poetical measure; and for want of eminence of accent regularly assigned to syllables, accent cannot be either the constituent or indicant of cadence or poetical measure in French, as it is in English, Italian, and other modern tongues. Nothing seems to remain then for constituting measure in the French language, but to number syllables; and for indication of measure, that is, for giving boundaries obvious to the ear, only Rime and Pause.

Being desirous of assuring myself of the nature of French verse, when at Paris many years ago, I often gave my attention, at the theater, to the declamation of the best actors, with the particular purpose of gathering it; but with so little success that, I must own, I have remained ever ignorant what it is that, under French rules, can make a French verse, with the requisite number of syllables, a more or a less harmonious verse. It will be remembered that I consider euphony as distinct from harmony. But the declamation of the theater might possibly the less assist, because it is a

rule

rule of the French stage, studiously to avoid giving any prominence to the rimes, which are essential to French verse, and rather to conceal them in the flow of speech. No regularity of measure then being exhibited by the disposition of either quantities or accents, and rime, the powerful and almost only indicant of measure in French verse, being concealed or disguised, what can remain to give any character of verse to French poetry, in the declamation of the theater? Indeed the very practice of such poets as Corneille and Racine, constantly to give rime to their dramatic poetry, sensible as they would be, hardly less than others, of its offensiveness on the stage, affords the strongest presumption of their conviction that, in their language, without rime could be no verse. Voltaire has offered what he has called unrimed or blank verse, in imitation of the English and Italian, or rather in ridicule of the English and Italian; for he has taken occasion, from the deficiency, of which he appears to have been justly sensible, in his own verses, and in all of the kind that could be composed in his language, to speak contemptuously of unrimed verse in general. Most reasonably he might speak contemptuously of unrimed verse in his own language, where it can be verse only in name and written form, having nothing essential to distinguish it from the meerest prose.

I remember to have met with a French grammar of the English language, wherein were directions

tions for the French learner to acquire the English pronuntiation, prefaced with the proper admonition that ‘ La langue Angloise est une langue cadencée, ‘ comme l’Italienne.’ Now those whose own language has cadence, have difficulty to conceive a language without it, and difficulty generally yet greater to divest their pronuntiation of cadence. Hence the principal peculiarities of foreigners in pronouncing the French language. Five and twenty or thirty years ago it was fashionable at Paris to call the ordinary English pronuntiation of French ‘ la pronontiation *daëtylienne* des Anglois ;’ a term not so more misapplied than *anapestic*, among our own learned, to mean nearly the same thing, or *iambic*, *trochaic*, and other names of antient feet measured by quantity, to signify different arrangements of accent in the English language.

It is this *daëtylian* pronuntiation of French verse in English mouths that has led some English writers of the most learned and able, but little familiar with French speech, to imagine the French epic verse, often called Alexandrine, fundamentally the same with our four-footed verse of the triple cadence ; as

A cobbler there was and he lived in a stall.

But there is no real analogy, in constitution or mechanism, between that English verse and the French epic. Occasionally indeed a French epic verse, with the most approved French pronuntiation,



tion, will be found bearing a strong similitude of our four-footed of the triple cadence; but occasionally also an equal similitude of that very different verse, our six-footed of the even cadence, not uncommonly called Alexandrine; and far oftener than either no form of English verse at all will appear. The similitude of English cadence which English mouths are apt to give generally to French verse, arises from an accentuation of the words which does not belong to the language. But the resemblance which French pronuntiation gives, here to one English cadence, there to another of a widely different constitution and character, arises from no accentuation inherent in the words, from no appertenance of the words severally, from nothing essential to the constitution of the verse, but from the accidental influence generally of emphasis only.

But the French people, who have able musicians, and excel all the world in dance, cannot be without sensibility to the powers of harmony in language, as well as in music and motion. The very phrase just noticed, ‘the dactylian pronuntiation of the English,’ would indicate so much. How then has the harmony of the Latin language, not the harmony of quantity only, which has vanished from all modern languages, but the harmony of accent also, retained and substituted in most of them, been, in the French, a daughter of the Latin, so completely lost?

It has been a just remark of able and observing writers,

writers, that languages have been most complex in their origin, and have been simplified with extent of use. Thus the dual number has dropped from the Greek and from the Anglo-Saxon. But conquest, and the transfer of a language to a new people, would tend still more powerfully to the simplification of the language transferred. In the fall of the Roman empire, while energy of mind, directing military force, gave political power to the conquering barbarians, science and arts, with, the general disposition of mankind to elegance, still so preserved civil influence to the old inhabitants, that the language of the latter prevailed, but with some necessary concessions. To make it readily intelligible to the conquerors, the various declensions, which puzzled them, were abandoned, and a very few prepositions served to indicate the cases equally of all declensions. The exact distinctions of quantity in syllables were at the same time lost. But accent, to judge from what remains of the former language of the conquerors, was an important circumstance of that language; whence, in learning the new speech, its accent was the more readily adopted. Thus accent remains the ruling indicant of cadence in the Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Romanesk or Southern French, as it had been of the Teutonic and Gothic dialects.

In a topographical description of France, printed at Paris in Lewis the Thirteenth's reign, it is stated that two languages then divided the country, with

the Loire for the boundary between them: the people to the northward of that river, says the author, speak French, those to the southward Roman, or, as we commonly call it, Romanesk or Romance. Now it was in the northern provinces that the Franks principally prevailed, after the southern had yielded to other barbarians, who extended their conquests over Spain. Long after the Franks the Normans introduced new barbarism extensively among the northern provinces. The language of the conquered was adopted by both people, but with alterations far greater than in the southern parts. It will not be difficult then to conceive how, in these circumstances, between the struggle in the mouths of the northern conquerors to pronounce Latin words, and the requisite efforts of the subdued people to make every syllable of their language obvious to foreign ears, not regularity of quantity only, but character of accent too might vanish. In making a new polysyllabical word clear to the ear and easy to the voice of the lordly learners, it would often be necessary to speak every syllable separately, with equal tone, as is common in teaching children, leaving the accent to be added when the articulation were already familiar. But the articulation itself undergoing considerable change, the altered word might become a member of the new dialect without a determined accentuation; and from the habit of thus omitting distinction of  
accent,



accent, the omission might become a characteristic of the new pronuntiation. But it will deserve notice that there is a difference between the Teutonic languages and the Latin in the principle of accentuation, which might furnish additional cause for the northern French to neglect, or discard from their new speech, the Latin tones. This difference may be illustrated by example from our own language. In our derivative words the accent always adheres steadily to some syllable of the root whereby it may best indicate the fundamental sense of the word; as in *mind*, *minded*, *mind*ing, *mind*ful, *mind*fully; *care*, *caring*, *care*ful, *care*lessly; *for*get, *for*getting, *for*gotten, *for*getfully, *for*getfulness. But in the Latin, abounding in inflexion, the accent was often moved to a new syllable, to assist the indication of a new shade of meaning intended by the inflexion. The fairest daughters of the Latin then, the Italian and Spanish, losing the inflexions, have preserved the Latin accentuation where, for sound, it is still advantageous, but for the meaning it rather tends to confusion. This may be seen in the Italian words *maggiore*, *minore*, *megliore*, *peggiore*, *amatore*, *leggitore*, *mietitore*, *arditaménte*, *debilménte*, *forzatoménte*, *amabilménte*, compared with the English words *gréater*, *smáll*er, *bétter*, *lóver*, *réader*, *réaper*, *bóldly*, *wéakly*, *fórcibly*, *lóvingly*, where the accent is on that syllable which distinguishes the fundamental sense of the word; whereas in the

Italian it affords no indication of difference in words of signification so widely differing. The Frankish and Norman conquerors therefore, pronouncing imperfectly, omitting final syllables, and finishing with those great alterations of the language which produced the modern French, might find it necessary, for making their speech intelligible, to increase the proportionate stress of the voice on the leading syllables, and yet unnecessary to give to any one of them a decided eminence. To this, at least as a concurrent cause, we may apparently attribute the loss of appropriate and distinguishing accent in the French language.

The French with all its defects, has found such extensive favor among the higher classes in the northern nations of Europe, nations of rough and uncultivated native speech, as to give occasion to French writers to boast of it as a sort of universal language. But it has never been able to make its way southward. Perhaps the simplicity which allows variation of tone only under the guidance of emphasis, may not be entirely without its own peculiar elegance, tho upon the whole a great defect in the language. For connection with music, it will be obvious that much facility is provided by the failure of accent, as well as of quantity, in French verse. But it will be also obvious that there can be scarcely any real analogy of character between any French verse (sentiment being out of the question) and any musical movement: the  
artificial

artificial connection between French verse and music may be what the musical composer pleases ; and of this facility the able musicians who, of late years, have been leading the French people toward a taste for Italian music, have availed themselves ; but for any natural connection means seem wholly wanting. In the old and truly national French music, a striking peculiarity of character was derived from the language with which it was connected, and that music no people but the French themselves could relish.

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## ARTICLE II.

### *Of the Italian Language.*

I HAVE not found that the principles of versification have been better explained for any other modern language than for our own. The striking effects of accent however have been observed in Italian not less than in English versification ; and it has been remarked that the mechanism of English and Italian verse is nearly the same : even our principal measures have been apparently borrowed from the Italian, especially our epic verse. Barretti, the author of the Italian English grammar and dictionary, a man of little talent and little learning,



learning, had however the very considerable advantage of living in some intimacy with Samuel Johnson. In his grammars he has undertaken to explain the texture of Italian verse to Englishmen and of English to Italians. For English verse he has merely abridged Johnson. In treating of Italian verse he shows his complete feeling of its congeniality with the English, observing of the epic that it differs from the English epic only in requiring constantly the hyper-rhythmical final syllable, the double ending, and in admitting and even requiring more variety, through a more frequent and wider departure from the primary, fundamental arrangement of accents; the primary arrangement being for both languages precisely the same. For example of that arrangement, in the Italian, he gives this couplet:

Che viver più felice e più beato  
Che ritrovarsi in servitù d'amore!

Where he says, 'the strong accents fall on each even syllable; that is, on the second, fourth, sixth, eighth, and tenth.' The Englishman will certainly find, in those two lines, so accented, precisely the measure of his own epic verse. But another matter will deserve attention here. It is evident that Barretti was sensible of the same double accentuation in trissyllabical and other longer words of the Italian language, which has been formerly noticed in treating of English accentuation,

centuation<sup>m</sup>, and that the weaker accents assist in the constitution of Italian as of English verse. In the second of the two lines above given, the first accent and the third, namely the accent on the first syllable of *ritrovarsi* and on the first of *servitù*, are of the weaker kind<sup>n</sup>.

But

<sup>m</sup> Sect. IV. of this Inquiry.

<sup>n</sup> After having described and illustrated thus justly the fundamental arrangement of accents in Italian epic verse, Barretti proceeds to speak of the allowed deviations with evident extravagance. ‘That we may avoid uniformity in our versification,’ he says, ‘we place our accents in different manners, sometimes on even, sometimes on uneven syllables: sometimes the very first syllable of the verse is forcibly accented, and sometimes the necessary rapidity of utterance gives no room at all for accents until we reach the fourth, fifth, and even sixth syllable. The accents sometimes are distant, sometimes they meet; now stronger, now softer, as chance or skill direct.’ Giving credit to the impression which this account, hastily taken, might make, it might be supposed there was no certain regularity in Italian verse, and, in short, that it was no verse. But the English reader will be aware that the forcible accenting of the first syllable is very common in English epic verse, and therefore not to be wondered at in Italian. He will know also that in English verse, as in Italian, the accents are sometimes more distant, and that, far oftener than in Italian, they meet, through the frequent occurrence of emphatical monosyllables. From Barretti’s own grammar and dictionary he may learn that every Italian word, not monosyllabical, has its predominating accent; and therefore the examples he has given of such lengthened intermission of accent cannot be strictly correct, and should only be understood as examples

But of the congeniality of English with Italian versification, I met at Rome formerly with proof, which I can no way so well explain as in relating the circumstances. They occurred accidentally, in conversation with the same learned old man, whom I have mentioned in speaking of Latin verse. Of modern languages, beside his own, he knew only French; which he would not speak, because, he said, the habit of speaking any foreign language tended to vitiate the true Roman pronuntiation. French verse he held in utter aversion, and for English verse, supposing it formed on the same model with the French, he had, by anticipation, a contempt evident enough, tho he avoided to declare it. I could not get credit with him for my assertion that, however the roughness of our language might disguise it, our verse was essentially the same as the Italian. No book being at hand to furnish

of remitted accentuation. His own rules and illustrations by example then, noticed in the text above, will show that in Italian as in English, longer words have secondary distinguishing accents; and thus all the differences of Italian from English epic verse will remain those only which have been hitherto, or will be hereafter noticed in the text.

Barretti was but a very imperfect master of the English language, as is too evident even in his dictionary, but still more glaring in some of his smaller works. His grammar and his travels have been written for him, and seem to bear some occasional marks of Johnson's pen. Johnson did not know Italian, and so would be likely to fail of exactness in describing, under Barretti's instruction, the anomalies of Italian versification.



example but Barretti's dictionary, I red to him the six lines from Rowe :

Let this auspicious day be ever sacred ;  
No mourning, no misfortune happen on it :  
Let it be mark'd for triumph and rejoicing :  
Let happy lovers ever keep it holy ;  
Chuse it to fill their hopes and crown their wishes,  
This happy day that gives me my Calista.

I had scarcely completed the second when, with evident surprize and pleasure, he cried out ' Bene, ' bene ;' and when I had finished, he expressed largely his gratification at finding English versification formed on the same model with that of his own language. Thus reconciled to our dramatic verse, I supposed I should have pleased him with the stanza of four and three feet, because Barretti commends it, and because the rimes happen to be all vocal :

When all shall praise and every lay  
Devote a wreath to thee,  
That day, for come it will, that day  
Shall I lament to see.

But I was disappointed. The measure is not used by the Italian poets, and I imagine the want of the double ending, the hypercatalectic syllable, disappointed his ear ; for when I red to him afterward Johnson's own verses cited by Barretti, harmonious verses with good rimes, but all with the single ending, he was evidently less satisfied than with Rowe's, which have the hypercatalectic syllable without rime. He was however  
pleased

pleased again with a stanza in which I thought the consonants terminating the rimes might have offended him :

'Twas when the seas were roaring  
With hollow blast of wind,  
A damsel lay deploring  
All on a rock reclined.

But here he found a near resemblance to the favorite measure of the Italian lyric poets,

In vece del naviglio  
Vede partir le sponde;  
Giura che fuggi il lido,  
E pur così non è.

Alessandro di Metastasio, at. 3. sc. 1.

The Italian epic verse then resembles the English with the differences only already noticed; namely, that it requires constantly the hypercatalectic syllable; that it admits more readily the aberration of the acute in the fourth, third, and even the second foot, and that it requires more use of these varieties, especially the aberration in the second.

Of modern poets who have written expressly for music, Metastasio is incontestably the chief. No other has studied the connection of music and poetry so much and so well. It is evident that he has sought variety of measures, and it is evident also that he has found no great variety in his language to please him. His favorite, clearly, has  
been

been that which appears to have been always the most ordinary measure for Italian song, the three-footed of the even cadence with the hypercatalectic syllable ; varied only with the omission of that syllable, or, in the Italian phrase, with the *rima tronca*, at regular intervals ; as in his well-known canzonet and palinode to Nice, already noticed. But whether those longer odes may have been less studied for connection with music I cannot tell, and therefore it may be surer to refer to his dramatic lyrics for example. The following is from his *Achille* :

Fra l'ombre un lampo solo  
 Basta al nocchier sagace,  
 Chè già ritrova il polo,  
 Già riconosce il mar.  
 Al pellegrin ben spesso  
 Basta un vestigio impresso  
 Perchè la via fallace  
 Non l'abbia ad ingannar.

Att. 1. sc. 6.

I have formerly noticed that the verses of our common stanza of four feet and three alternately, arrange themselves all readily with the same musical time as those of this Italian stanza, the measure being filled through the assistance of either a long note at the end of the shorter verses, or a pause, which offends neither in music nor in poetry. Still more readily and regularly these Italian three-footed verses, with the hypercatalectic syllable,



syllable, assort themselves with the musical time of four equal feet. Example completely in point occurs in a song set to music by the celebrated Galuppi, compared with a song written by the late learned Mr. Harris, author of *Hermes*, and by him adapted to the same music. The Italian song runs thus :

La pastorella al prato  
Col gregge se ne va,  
Col agnellino al lato,  
Cantando in libertà.

This, it will be seen, is exactly the measure of the English song lately quoted,

'Twas when the seas were roaring.

But Mr. Harris, skilled as he was in music, did not fear to give to the same notes a poetical measure, very considerably different. His lines are these :

With us alike each season suits ;  
The spring has fragrant flow'rs,  
The summer corn, the autumn fruits,  
The winter social hours.

The reader who knows the air will perceive that the additional syllable in the first and third lines, tho an acuted syllable, giving character to an additional foot in the poetry, is so far from an incumbrance to the music that it rather fills the measure with advantage ; and yet the second and fourth lines, shorter by a complete foot, have no ungraceful deficiency, but on the contrary,  
through

through protraction of quantity in the note accompanying the last syllable, or a rest after it, or both, the measure is enough indicated, and with effect more grateful to the ear than if this variety were not introduced. The musical cadence indeed, through the licence which I have formerly mentioned as common among modern musicians, is triple, while the poetical cadence is even; but the example nevertheless, for the purpose for which I have given it, is complete.

Metastasio I think never uses the **FOUR-FOOTED** of the even cadence but with the first foot truncated; as in these examples:

Fra l'orror della tempesta,  
Che alle stelle il volto imbruna,  
Qualche raggio di fortuna  
Gia comincia a scintillar.

Dopo forte si funesta  
Sarà placida questa alma,  
E godrà, tornata in calma,  
I perigli rammentar.

Siroe, att. 1. sc. 17.

Sia lontano ogni cimento,  
L'onda sia tranquilla e pura,  
Buon guerrier non s'afficura,  
Non si fida il buon nocchier.

Anche in pace, in calma ancora,  
L'armi adatte, i remi appresta,  
Di battaglia o di tempesta  
Qualche assalto a sostener.

La Clemenza di Tito, att. 2. sc. 4.

The reason of this will be obvious to the musical reader. In English poetry, the even four-footed verse, in its most ordinary form, without the hypercatalectic syllable, is adapted to fill the musical measure of four bars (or if they are half bars it is in effect the same thing) without deficiency and without excess. But the grace of Italian poetry requiring generally the hypercatalectic syllable to make the *rima giusta* or double ending, that syllable, were the first foot complete, would be hyperrhythmical, and would very much incumber the music. On the contrary, the first foot being truncated, the last syllable of the verse, otherwise hypercatalectic and hyperrhythmical, becomes a complementary syllable, without which an extension of time, either by quantity or rest, would be necessary to fill the cadence. Thus, with its double ending, the truncated Italian verse fills the measure of four musical bars, like the English complete four-footed with the single ending.

It will be evident, from a view equally of Italian and English verse in connection with music, that, for that connection, some occasional shortening of the verse, that may give opportunity for rest in the music, at convenient intervals, is advantageous. Whether this has been considered by any of our later poets, who have written for music, I know not; tho I think it was by the elder, before the gigantic genius of Handel had taught a disregard for such niceties, by showing that, with power of  
violence



violence enough, even prose might be forced into association with music, and become that which our forefathers considered as the very opposite to prose, song. But Metastasio has been always carefully attentive to this point, and therefore constantly introduces the *rima tronca*, or single ending, at intervals among his four-footed lyrics. On the other hand, in English verse of this measure, the prevalence, nearly to constancy, of the single ending, which the genius of the language requires, is attended with a recurrence of the pause ungracefully quick and uniform. Hence apparently Milton's nice ear has been led to prefer that mixture of the complete four-footed with the truncated which prevails in his *Allegro* and *Penferoso*. In no other way perhaps, equally suited to the genius of our language, could he have gained so nearly the advantage of the Italian mixture of the double with the single rime. Tho the effect in recitation is very different, yet, for combination with music, the grave syllable, at the end or at the beginning of the verse, fills the time with equal convenience.

Metastasio's farther varieties, in the even cadence, are rarely any other than those produced by varying the disposition of the different kinds of rimes.

The triple cadence has been in considerable favor with the great poet of the Italian musical drama, and he has evidently thought it fit equally for

for sublime and for lighter subjects. His varieties of lyric verse in it exceed those in the even. His most common triple measure is that of the celebrated ode to Venus, heretofore noticed. The following address to Fortune, in his Scipio's dream, is in the same measure, but varied, at wide intervals, with the rima tronca, and so forming a different stanza :

Dì che sei l'arbitra  
 Del mondo intero,  
 Ma non pretendere  
 Perciò l'impero,  
 D'un alma intrepida  
 D'un nobil cor.  
 Te vili adorino,  
 Nume tiranno,  
 Quei che non prezzano,  
 Quei che non hanno  
 Che'l basso merito  
 Del tuo favor.

For analysis of Italian verse, as well as of English, it appears most convenient to consider the accented syllable, when in its regular place, as the last rather than the first of a foot, both in the even and the triple cadence. Under this division, the first foot of all the verses of the odes to Venus, and to Fortune wants its two grave syllables. Hence, as we have observed in the four-footed of the even cadence, the concluding syllables are not, like the concluding syllable of the epic endecasyllabo, hypermetrical, but complementary. In  
 connection

connection with music, this triple measure, like the even measure last noticed, requires, for alliance with its first syllable, the accented note beginning a bar. The first, third and fifth verses of the stanza of the Ode to Fortune are adapted to coalesce with the notes of two bars, or two half-bars, of triple time, without rest: the second and fourth verses, having a syllable less, will require either extension of quantity, or a rest, to fill the musical time. The sixth, having two syllables less, must have its time filled either by more extension of quantity or more rest.

A few instances we find, in *Metastasio*, of this measure, wanting constantly one of the complementary syllables, and at intervals both; and the abruptness thus produced is sometimes advantageous for particular expression, as in this example from his *Artaxerxes*:

Non ti son padre;  
 Non mi sei figlio;  
 Pietà non sento  
 D'un traditor.  
 Tu sei cagione  
 Del tuo periglio;  
 Tu sei tormento  
 Del genitor.

Att. 1. sc. 12.

In the connection of these lines with the correspondent musical cadence, to fill the musical time, either a rest is necessary at the end of every verse, or a protraction of the quantity of the pen-



ultimate syllable. A nearly similar rest or protraction, which a good ear will lead the voice to give, even in reciting verses of this measure, produces the abruptness which cannot fail to be striking in them, even in recitation.

Where therefore occasion for particular expression has not recommended this broken measure, a more continued flow has been preferred, and the over-frequency of interruption has been obviated by partly filling the void in the first foot. One grave syllable preceding the acute of the first foot, and another following the acute of the last, the musical measure is filled exactly as in the Ode to Venus and the Address to Fortune, tho the character of the verse in recitation is made considerably different by the different situation of the pause. The following example is from Metastasio's Demofonte :

Prudente mi chiedi:  
 Mi brami innocente.  
 Lo senti ; lo vede ;  
 Dipende da te.  
 Di lei, per cui peno,  
 Se penso al periglio,  
 Tal smania ho nel seno,  
 Tal benda ho sul ciglio,  
 Che l'alma di frena  
 Capace non è.

Demof. att. 2. sc. 2.

The deficiency of double rimes, and of words fit for double and triple endings, tho without rime, makes this measure less fit for our language ; yet  
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the measure of the hundred and fourth psalm, already quoted, differs from it in nothing so essentially as the more irregular introduction of the single ending; and our common four-footed verse of the triple cadence is but a duplication of it; as in this couplet of Dryden,

When present we love, and—when absent agree :  
I think not of Iris,—nor Iris of me.

Far seldomer among Metastasio's songs occurs the three-footed verse of the triple cadence; which nevertheless he appears to have thought not less fit for sublime than for light expression, tho our poets have ventured upon it only for such subjects as those of Shenstone's muse. Metastasio has chosen it for this address to Jupiter :

I tuoi strali, terror de' mortali,  
Ah sospendi, gran padre de' numi,  
Ah deponi, gran nume de' re.  
Fumi il tempio del sangue d'un empio,  
Ch' oltraggiò con infano furore,  
Sommo Giove, un immago di te.  
L'onde chete del pallido Lete  
L'empio varchi; ma il nostro timore,  
Ma il suo fallo portando con se——

Olimpiade, att. 3. sc. 6.

and for this sublime image :

Son quel fiume che gonfio d'umori;  
Quando il gelo si scioglie in torrenti,  
Selve, armenti, capanne, pastori,  
Porta seco, e ritegno non ha.

Se si vede negl'argini stretto,  
 Sdegni il letto, confonde le sponde,  
 E superbo fremendo sen va.

Didone, att. 1. sc. 13.

He has chosen it also for this more playful sentiment :

Ogn'amante può dirsi guerriero ;  
 Che diversa da quella di Marte  
 Non è molto la scuola d'Amor.  
 Questo adopra lusinghe ed inganni :  
 Quello inventa l'insidie, gli aguati ;  
 E si scorda gli affanni passati,  
 L'uno e l'altro quand' è vincitor.

Iffipile, att. 1. sc. 10.

If, in Italian epic verse, a licence is admitted and a variety required, beyond what we allow to our own, in Metastasio's lyrics it is not so : on the contrary we find there a scrupulous regularity, a regularity much stricter than among our lyric poets ; no mixture of verses of more and fewer feet, no licence for more or fewer syllables, except in regard to grave syllables following the last foot, which may be two, one, or none ; and, even in regard to this variety, having once formed his stanza, he strictly preserves the form. This then is remarkable of his verses of the triple cadence. In the two-footed verse, if it concludes with what the Italians call a verbo sdrucchiolo, that is, if two grave syllables follow the last acuted syllable, then the first foot of the verse always wants both its grave syllables : if only one grave syllable follow the last acute,



acute, then the first foot may have one grave syllable preceding its acute, but only one; and the form adopted for the first foot of the stanza, is strictly preserved in the first foot of every verse of the poem. But in the three-footed verse of the triple cadence, never are less than two grave syllables preceding the first acute; so that the first foot of the three-footed verse is always complete, that of the two-footed never.

The reason of the difference, thus constantly observed, will not be obscure to the musical reader at all accustomed to observe music in connection with poetry. It rests on the same principle which has led the Italian poets, as before remarked, to deny a complete first foot to their four-footed measure of the even cadence. If the two-footed verse of the triple cadence had its first foot complete, and had also a hyper-rhythmical syllable following its last, the measure would be altogether awkward for connection with music; because the two feet would fill two bars or half-bars, and the hyper-rhythmical syllable, from the cause formerly mentioned, would be a superfluity, not readily to be brought to accord with the musical cadence. But the three-footed verse not being in itself adapted to fill the times of musical measure, but always wanting either extension of quantity, or rest, the hyper-rhythmical syllable there only assists toward the completion of that measure.

The varieties in which Metastasio indulges, in the disposition of the indicatory accents, are narrowly limited. In the even three-footed verse indeed he freely uses the aberration in the first foot; whether the accentuation of his language denied a stricter adherence to the more regular form, which is far more adapted to coalition with music, or he judged it necessary so far to concede to effect in recitation. Very rarely however we find any other aberration of the accent in that measure. In the four-footed verse, sometimes the acute is wanting on the single syllable of the first foot. But it is to be considered that, in recitation, that syllable is rendered conspicuous, by a certain degree of emphasis, resulting from the pause which of course takes place at the end of a verse; and it will scarcely ever be found that this syllable, tho wanting the orthoepical, may not, without offence, receive the musical accent; as in the line given from Siroe,

Sarà placida questa alma——

Moreover this aberration is of rare occurrence. Sometimes, but still very rarely, the aberration is admitted in the third foot, as in the first line quoted from the *Clemenza di Tito*;

Sia|lonta|no ógni|cimento——

But it will be observed that every four-footed verse consists of two equal hemistichs; so that the aberration in the third foot, which is the first of the second

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cond hemistich, has privilege nearly as that on the first foot of a verse.

In that triple two-footed verse which wants both the grave syllables of its first foot, of which the odes to Venus and to Fortune are examples, liberty is frequently taken with the single syllable of the first foot : which is often found less powerfully acuted than the following syllable. But here that single syllable is so rendered eminent by situation, as to be not unfit for association with the musical accent. In the other forms of verse of the triple cadence I think aberration of the acute is scarcely ever found ; and even the duplication, in English verse not uncommon, in Italian is very rare. The simplicity and regularity, in the mechanism of the Italian lyric verse, furnish strong indication that the licences admitted and even required in the epic, have originated in the separation of epic verse from music. Wanting the varieties which music furnishes, other varieties, accommodated to simple recitation, became necessary ; varieties which render verse far less ready for connection with music.

For DRAMATIC dialogue, as I have had occasion to observe in treating of English verse, the Italians use their endecasillabo, the even five-footed epic verse with the hypermetrical syllable, varied by irregular mixture of the three-footed, which also constantly bears the hypermetrical syllable.



## ARTICLE 3.

*Of the Spanish, Portuguese and Romanesk Languages.*

THE Castilian, or classical Spanish, and the Romanesk, or southern French, hardly differ so much from the classical Italian, that is the Tuscan and Roman, as some dialects within Italy: even the Neapolitan, bordering on the Roman, and the Bolognese, bordering on the Tuscan, are almost other languages. But in all these the principle of versification is the same as in the classical Italian and the English. The epic verse of the Spaniards and Portuguese differs not from the Italian. But the dramatic verse of the Spanish poets, whose dramatic works are abundant, differs greatly. It is the truncated four-footed, a favorite lyric measure of the Italian poets, but never used by them for dramatic dialogue. The Spanish poets use it also commonly as a lyric measure, generally in stanzas of four verses, with imperfect rimes; of which bishop Percy has given a specimen toward the end of his relics of antient English poetry. The imperfection of the rimes, common among the Spanish poets, should apparently be attributed neither to negligence or unskilfulness in the poet, nor to defect in the language: so far indeed from  
 implying

implying defect in the language, perhaps they rather imply perfection; indicating that the Spanish lyric poetry wants less assistance from that coarse ornament than other modern European tongues.

The Romanesk is a speech little generally known; passing with many for an imperfect or corrupt French; but it deserves another estimation. Since Lewis the Thirteenth's reign probably the Parisian French has been gaining much upon it; and in no long time possibly the Romanesk may be worn out, as the Cornu-British is of late years extinct, and the various English dialects are rapidly vanishing. But in the southern provinces of France the Romanesk yet remains, nearly as it stood in the time of the Provencial poets, the patriarchs of modern European verse. It is a language between the Italian, Spanish, and French; in its dialects approaching the Spanish more as it approaches Spain, the Italian as it approaches Italy, the French as it approaches Paris; but, in its general character having more of the Spanish. Since the fall of the kingdom of Arles, and the decay of the courts of Aix and Toulouse, it has been little cultivated but in popular songs. But men of superior acquirements have sometimes amused themselves with compositions in it; and one, eminent among the guilty leaders of the French revolution, after having shown its yet remaining powers in verse, proposed, as I have been assured, to show of what it was capable in prose, but that circumstances

stances led him to views of ambition in the political line, and then other circumstances imposed silence upon him. By accident a genuine specimen of the language, in its rudest and purest state, fell in my way, which may possibly amuse some readers curious about languages. Mr. de Gualy, of the regiment of Castries, going to embark at Portsmouth for the unfortunate expedition to Quiberon, came to visit his kinsman, of the same name, then officer in a militia regiment stationed in Fareham barracks. The family of Gualy is noble, of the western part of Languedoc; the chief intitled baron de St. Rome, from a small town of that name on the river Tarne, but having his residence at Milhaud, or Milliau, on the same river. The Gualys being protestants, and so, till of late years, excluded from the French service, the father of the militia officer had migrated to England, and reached the rank of lieutenant-colonel in the English service; into which he also introduced his son, who was captain in the second battalion of the first foot, before he engaged in the militia. After dinner at the regimental mess, singing being proposed, the officer of Castries offered to bear his part: he could not sing English, but, if he might be allowed, he said, he would sing a popular song of his own wild country, which his cousin, who in his youth had been once to see the chief of their family at Milhaud, would remember as a favorite of their common grandfather. Being pleased with

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the air, which had far more of the character of Spanish than French music, I desired him to recite the words, which he did, and I then requested him to write them for me. He said that, tho speaking the dialect most familiarly, he was unaccustomed to write it, and therefore he must spell as he best could. Amid the disturbance of surrounding conversation, then, he wrote as it is here given, with the difference only that the accents marking the cadence, as far as I could depend on my memory of his pronuntiation, have been added. For it is to be observed that the Romanesk is a language of cadence marked by accent, like the Italian, Spanish and English. It may be convenient also for most readers to mention that consonants written are never silent, as in French, and that *e* and *u* are to be pronounced always fully, as in Italian; the French *u* and feminine *e* being unknown to the Romanesk. Mr. de Gualy has placed a *d* before *j*, *ch*, and *g*, meerly to indicate that those letters are differently pronounced from the French; namely *j* as in English, *ch* as in English and Spanish, and *g* as in English and Italian. The words which he has written *djamai* and *dchangearie* would be represented in Italian orthography by the letters *giamai* and *ciangiarie*. In writing the pronoun of the first person *you*, he mentioned that the pronuntiation was precisely that of the English pronoun of the second person, represented by the same letters. Everywhere, with him, the diphthongal notation *ou* and the simple vowel *u* represent the same sound.

sound. *T* has been doubled in the word *touút*, simply to admonish that it is not silent as in French, and *n* has been also doubled in the words *kann* and *pendenn*, only to warn that it is the real consonant, and not the sign of the French nasal vowel, which is as strange to the Languedocian dialect as the French *n* and feminine *e*. It is remarkable of the Languedocian that it confounds *v* and *b* even more than the Spanish or Neapolitan: Mr. de Gualy wrote both letters alike; and in Languedocian pronuntiation it is often difficult for the ear to distinguish them. I have preferred one or the other only as it would best mark for the reader the meaning of the word. The song then follows:

Kánn tu ríses touút me pláï;

Animaríes úno sóuko:

Tous uillous e toún air gáï

Fáou vení l'aïgo à la bouco.

Egáï, Egáï.

Encáro nouñ la téni maí la vóli;

Encaro noun la teni maí l'aouráï.

Mé dizoué que mouñ rivál

Seé ven pendenn mouñ absénça.

Lui facaráï ámb' un pál,

Se prenn à quelo licénça.

Egáï, &c.

Kán lou céł se viraríe,

Cómmo fáou los áoumelétos

Djamaï youñ ne dchandgearíe

L'áamour kaï per má brunéto.\*

The

\* The following literal version is intended meerly to answer the purpose of a vocabulary:

Quand

The measure of this song is that most in favor with the Italian lyric poets, and almost exclusively with the Spanish, formed into a tetraſtic, which is followed by a couplet in the Italian epic measure, the endecafillabo. With regard to the dialect, the reader will have obſerved that the diſcrimination of ſexual terminations, preſerved in the Italian and Spaniſh, from the Latin, has been nearly loſt in the Romanefk. A careleſs pronuntiation of the firſt vowel, *a*, has brought it to the ſound of *o* in the ſouthern language of France, and ſo has prepared it for the degradation to the half articulate ſound of the feminine *e* in the northern, or proper French. But the ability to diſmiſs the pronouns from its verbs is an advantage over the proper French, which, even in this village ſong, is ſtriking.

Quand tu ris tout tu me plais :

Tu animerois une ſouche,

Tes yeux & ton air gai

Font venir l'eau à la bouche.

Egai, egai.

Je ne la tiens pas encore, mais je la veux :

Je ne la tiens pas encore, mais je l'aurai.

L'on dit que mon rival

S'eſt venu pendant mon abſence.

Je l'aſſommerois avec une maſſue

S'il prenne a celle-là quelque licence.

Egai, &c.

Quand le ciel ſe vireroit

Comme ſe font les omelettes

Jamais je ne changerois

L'amour que j'ai pour ma brunette.

I think



I think it likely that in a farther investigation of Spanish, Portuguese, and Romanesk poetry, to which might be added that of the Italian and Sicilian dialects, and of all other daughters of the Latin, some curious elucidation of the natural connection of music and poetry would result; but this labor I must leave for those who, with more leisure, have also much more familiarity with those speeches.

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#### ARTICLE 4.

##### *Of the modern and middle-aged Greek.*

I HAVE heard of a dissertation, which I never met with, on the seventy-two dialects of the modern Greek. A language so extensively spoken as the Greek, among countries where other languages were also spoken, could not but acquire various shades in various parts, and would be likely to become, in some places, so altered, that it might be hard to say whether it remained Greek or no. Yet the Greek has not, like the Latin, branched out into daughter languages. The literary Greek, remaining the language of the polite to the final overthrow of the Greek empire, is still looked up to, by the well educated, as their proper tongue; and all modern deviations from it, how-  
ever

ever unavoidably to be practised for the common purposes of life, are considered rather as jargons than dialects. The modern Greek, therefore, tho capable of being rendered, by cultivation, equal perhaps at least to any modern European speech, has remained almost uncultivated. No nation upon earth however probably is without its popular songs; and popular poetry can exist only in the common language of the people. For popular preaching also the speech of the many alone will serve. In popular poetry therefore almost only, and popular preaching, the language of modern Greece is to be found committed to writing.

In treating of this language I shall still prefer the method taken for our own speech, tracing the stream from the most modern examples upward toward its source. Thus we shall be led through what is commonly called the middle-aged Greek, which differs from the classical by numerous new words, required by new circumstances, but not by anything characteristical in the language, so that it will not require here any distinct consideration.

The most recent examples of the modern Greek language, to which I can refer, are of the predicatorial or oratorical kind, the proclamations of Bonaparte, and of the patriarch of Constantinople, to the maritime Greeks; both published with the intercepted correspondence of the French army in Egypt. The former is of the seventy-two dialects, and yet exhibits strong marks of the superior language

guage whence it originated. The other is the polite speech of Constantinople at the present day.

The poetry however only of the language is our proper object here, and of this the most modern examples that have fallen in my way are those given by Monsieur Guys in his *Voyage Litteraire de la Grece*. When at Marseille, seven and twenty years ago, I had an advantageous introduction to Mr. Guys, but it stood me in little stead. He was a man disposed to retirement, and his situation was awkward. It is indeed not easily described in our language; because as the circumstances have no existence with us, terms are of course wanting. Mr. Guys was of a *bourgeoise* family, and having acquired wealth, had purchased a nominal office under the crown, that of *secrétaire du roi*, which conferred what the French called *noblesse*, meaning the rank and condition of a gentleman. He was thus raised above the hospitable society of the rich merchants of the then highly flourishing city of Marseille, and yet would be looked upon with no respect by the poor and proud *noblesse* of Provence, into whose rank he had obtruded himself. He lived therefore at Marseille, where, unless in office, no others of his new rank would live, in a manner insulated among his books; and to me, who had passed from a polite and hospitable reception at the house of one of the oldest families of Provencial noblesse to the ready civilities of the Marseillaise merchants, and might pass again and repass (a privilege how-

ever



ever almost peculiar then to English travellers) Mr. Guys was at a loss how to show civility. My acquaintance with him therefore has been almost only through his book.

Mr. Guys' long residence among the Greeks, his opportunities for communication among them, and his taste and learning, superior as a merchant, gave him advantages for selecting the specimens which he has given of modern Greek poetry. Unfortunately however, they have been printed with an incorrectness which seems to be accounted for only by his distance, at Marseille, from the press of Paris. Unfortunately also his translations of them, tho in prose, are so loose, even beyond the ordinary licentiousness of French translators, that they scarcely assist at all toward correction of the original. Nevertheless, in the want of other specimens, they are valuable, and, for my principal purpose, nearly perfect, because the measures are everywhere clear. They are all obviously accentual, all adorned with rime, and no way essentially differing from Italian and English measures. The following lines begin a song which Mr. Guys calls the most modern, composed in compliment to a young woman his neighbour :

Φῶς τοῦ ἡλίου ἐκλαμπρόν, λάμψις ὠραιότατη,  
 ῥίψε καὶ εἰς τοῦ λόγου μου, ἀστὴρ καθαρωτάτη,  
 Ἀπ' τῶν ματιῶν σου, ταῖς βολαῖς, ἀκτῖνα χρύσην μίαν,  
 Νὰ εὕρω εἰς τὰ πάθῃμου καμίαν θεραπείαν.

The accentual marks, representing, in modern Greek writing, exactly the same affection of pronunciation as the same marks in English and Italian dictionaries, can leave no difficulty for the measure of these verses to the English or Italian reader.

Perhaps the classical scholar, unversed in modern Greek, may be surprized, and yet pleased, to find the first line of this modern ballad so completely classical Greek. He would, I think, in vain look for an equally complete Latin line among Italian songs. For interpretation of the others he will want some assistance. *Ῥίψε* is the imperative of *Ῥίπτω*, a common corruption of the classical word *Ῥίπτω*, which is itself not obsolete. *Ἐἰς τοῦ λόγου μου* is a very common modern phrase, meaning no more than *ἔἰς ἐμὲ*. The French have a phrase nearly analogous, *de ma part*, meaning no more than *de moi*, and the Spaniards use ordinarily *nosotros*, *vosotros*, with no other signification than *nos* and *vos*. In both editions of Mr. Guys' book the next word is corrupted, and his translation does not help in the least toward correction. In writing *ἀσὴρ* I have done my best only in conjecture. *Ματιῶν* is genitive plural from *μάτις*, the common word for *an eye*; curiously formed by syncope fore and aft, if a sea-phrase so exactly applicable may be allowed, from *ὁμμάτιον*. *Σπίτι*, the common modern word for a house, is formed in the same manner from the Latin *hospitium*.

Ταῖς ἑολαῖς is analogous to the Italian phrase *alle volte*, at turns, or *sometimes*. Νὰ is the sign of the subjunctive mood, contracted from ἵνα. Καμίαν is the accusative feminine of the modern word compounded of καὶ and εἷς, with ν introduced to obviate hiatus, and declined κανεῖς, καμία, κανέν, κανένος, καμίας, κανένος, meaning *some*. The following translation renders the Greek word for word:

‘Bright light of the sun, beautiful splendor! cast  
 ‘on me, thou purest star, from thine eyes some-  
 ‘times one golden ray, that I may find for my  
 ‘sufferings some relief.’

Another song, in the same measure, has been well chosen by Mr. Guys as an example of the metaphorical stile, which the modern Greeks have adopted from the orientals. Tho not a model for taste, it is a more advantageous specimen of the language than any other very modern composition I have seen. The corruption in the printing is therefore to be regretted; yet the corrections, in the six lines here following, have been small, and I think made with little risk:

Τὸ δένδρον τῆς ἀγάπης σου, μὲ φυλλὰ πωστοσύνης,  
 Ὅσκιόν ἐλπίδος μ’ ἔδιδεν, ἀμείρου σωφροσύνης.  
 Πλὴν τῶρα ἐμαράνθηκαν τὰ φυλλὰ, κ’ ὑποφέρω  
 Ἀπελπισίας φλόγισμον, κ’ ἄδικα παραδέρνω.  
 Τῆς ὑποσχέσεως κλαδιὰ τοῦ μίσους ἢ ψυχροῦτος  
 Εἰξέρανε παλιάπασυ, ἐχθρᾶς καὶ ἡ κυοῖτης.



Mr. Guys' version of this song is so very free, that to discover in it any resemblance of the original is not easy. Tho his language probably would ill bear a close translation, yet he seems to have conceded unreasonably much to the taste of his fellowcountrymen. Word for word almost it may run in English thus: 'The tree of thy love, ' with leaves of faithfulness, gave me the shadow ' of hope, of infinite purity. But now withered ' are the leaves, and I undergo the burning of ' despair, and suffer wrongfully. The branches of ' promise have been blighted by the chill of hatred ' and the frost of enmity.'

Mr. Guys gives an account of a diversion, popular among the modern Greeks, called the Cledona, in which distics are sung by the young women. They are in the same measure as the foregoing, and mark its popularity. The distic which opens the game may deserve notice, as indicating that the damsels of the Greek empire have not failed of their part to maintain, in the minds of the youths, the antient martial spirit of the nation :

\* Ανοιξε τὸν κλῆδονα, ναύγι ὁ χαριτομένος

\* Ὅπῃ τὰ κίτρα πολεμια, καὶ βίην κερδομένος.

This

\* The words *ναύγι* and *βίην* are not to be found among three modern Greek dictionaries in my possession, but the latter is evidently enough the Italian word *viene* from the Latin *venit*. I guess only that *ναύγι* may have been formed either from the antient Greek *ναῦς*, or rather from the Italian *navigare*. Mr.

Guys

This may be rendered literally in English thus:

‘Open the Cledona: my beloved sails to the ene-  
my’s camp, and comes off conqueror.’

Of one distic more, bearing a sentiment likely to be popular in a lively nation, reduced, in consequence of the failure of martial spirit, to the present condition of the Greeks, I will venture to attempt correction and translation:

Τὰ γέλα με τὰ κλαίματα, με τὴν χαρὰν ἢ πρίκα:

Μιὰν ὥραν ἐπαρδήκατε κι ομᾶδι ἐγενηθήκα.

‘Laughter with weeping, sorrow with joy, in  
‘one hour were sown, and together sprang.’

Mr. Guys says that, in singing these distics, each verse is divided into hemistichs. But had we not this information, which might be necessary for Mr. Guys’ fellowcountrymen, it would be obvious enough, to those versed in accentual poetry, that, tho written as couplets, they are really stanzas of four verses, like the Chevy-chace cri-

Guys has given what he calls a translation of these distics; but it is in verse, and being of course not less pure French, in taste and in phrase, than his prose versions, unless for any who may admire it as French poetry, it is utterly useless.

‘Πρίκα seems a corruption, preferred for rime-sake to the more classical forms, preserved yet in politer use, *πίκρα* and *πιχρία*.

326 INQUIRY INTO THE PRINCIPLES OF  
 ticised in the Spectator, and Tickell's well-known  
 ballad :

Of Leinster, famed for maidens fair,  
 Bright Lucy was the grace,  
 Nor e'er did Liffy's limpid stream  
 Reflect a fairer face. —

with the difference only that the Greek rimes are  
 all double.

Mr. Guys has given a specimen only of one other  
 measure, in which single rimes are introduced,

Μὲ δυσυχίαις πολεμῶ,  
 Μὲ βάσανα ὡς τὸ κεμὸ  
 Ἐῖμαι, καὶ κινδυνεύω,  
 Καὶ νὰ χάθω κονιεύω,

Στὸ πέλαγος τῶν συμφορῶν  
 Μὲ ἐπικίνδυνον καιρὸν,  
 Μ' ἀνέμους ὀλαθρίους  
 Σφόδρους καὶ ἐναντίους. \*

This arrangement has less elegance, whether for  
 recitation or connection with music, than the

\* With this song Mr. Guys has given the Grecian music.  
 The word κεμὸ, in his second edition, is in his first λεμὸ, and  
 what either may mean his translation will not inform, nor have  
 I been able to learn. Μὲ is a contraction of μετὰ. Κονιεύω is  
 to approach. It is a most curious incident of the modern Greek  
 language that it has totally lost the infinitive mood, the want of  
 which is sometimes supplied by a participle, but generally, as  
 here, by the subjunctive mood. Νὰ χάθω κονιεύω is literally  
 'I approach that I sink,' meaning 'I am ready to sink.'

ordinary



ordinary Italian forms of stanza: the rests are divided more advantageously where the single rhymes are at wider distances from the double.

A Greek song, of a measure different from any given by Mr. Guys, is found in doctor Chandler's account of his travels in Greece. It has been selected with no purpose of showing either the language, or those who speak it, advantageously, and will deserve notice only for the failure of other examples of the measure; which is exactly that of Milton's Allegro :

Mirth admit me of thy crew.

Πίσκοπος του Δαμαλά,

Μήτε νου μήτε μυαλά,

Τὰ λινὰ δὲν ἤθελες,

Τὰ μεγάλα γίρεδες.

Τράβα τὸ χερόμυλο,

Κόβνα τ' Αραπόπουλο.\*

\* The story is told by doctor Chandler, that a bishop of Damalà, in the antient Epidaurian territory, dissatisfied with the smallness of the fishes brought him, would go out himself with the fishing-boats. Taken by a Moorish corsair he was sold as a slave, and, being found little capable of other work, was employed as assistant to a nurse in rocking a child. Contemplating his folly and consequent misery, he composed the song, which literally translated, runs thus: ' Bishop of Damalà, ' neither sense nor brain. Little ones you would not; great ' ones you coveted. Turn the hand-mill; rock the Arab- ' child.'

These are all so recent that they may be considered as examples of the Greek versification of the present day; which evidently rests on precisely the same principles as the Italian, and that large portion of the other western European congenial with the Italian. I propose now then, with the materials before me (more might easily be obtained by the curious, but these may perhaps suffice for my immediate purpose) to trace Greek versification upward toward antiquity.

From the examples already given it will be no very wide step to a work printed at Venice in 1658, a translation of Guarini's *Pastor Fido*, by a Greek of the island of Zant. The title runs, Πάστωρ Φίδος, ἡγουν Ποιμὴν Πιστὸς, μεταγλωττισμένος ἀπο τὸ ἰδίωμα τὸ Ἰταλικόν, παρ' ἐμοῦ Μιχαὴλ Σουμμάχη, ἐκ πολεως Ζακύνθου.

The whole of the dialogue is in rimed distics of the ordinary seven-footed verse, or, perhaps we should rather call them stanzas of alternately four and three feet. We have already noticed this as the most common form of modern Greek Poetry. The formality of this measure ill bears comparison with the elegant freedom of the Italian unrimed dramatic, irregularly compounded of five-footed and three-footed verses. The spirited opening of the *Pastor Fido* is known to all who have but looked into Italian poetry :

Ite voi, che chiudeste  
L'orribil fera, a dar l'usato segno

Della

Della futura caccia ; ite svegliando

Gli occhi col corno, e colla voce i cuori.

Amplification of phrases, and repetition of sentiments, seem ordinary and rather characteristical faults of the modern Greek poets, but especially of the translator of the Pastor Fido, who has dilated and weakened the foregoing nervous passage thus :

Ἀμείν' ἑσείς, ἀξιοὶ βοσκοὶ, πόχετε σφαλισμένον  
 Τὸ φοβερότατον θηρὶδ', καὶ τὸ πολλ' ἀγριωμένον,  
 Καὶ, κατὰ τὸ συνήθημας, δώσετε τὸ σημάδι,  
 Τοῦ κυνηγιῶν ποχεὶ ναρδῇ, καὶ κάμετ' ὅλοι ὁμάδῃ,  
 Τὸ βούκνιν νὰ κυπνήθῃ, τὰ μάτια νὰ ξυπνήσουν,  
 Καὶ ταῖς καρδίαις, μὲ τᾶς φωναῖς, κάμελε ν' ἀγρυπνήσουν.

The last line, with its interior rimes, may perhaps excite a smile through recollection of similar sounds in similar arrangement in the ludicrous song Of noble race was Shenkin :

' At prison-base, and football-chase, cotsploit how hur could  
 nick it.' y

But it should nevertheless be recollected that our forefathers were delighted with very long metrical romances, some of them bearing much of the dramatic character, in a similar measure ; and that this measure, however mismanaged by the Zacynthian versifier, is the measure of the later

y The modern Greek diphthongal notation *αι* represents exactly the same simple sound as our *a* in the words *chase* and *base*. *Αις* is the termination of the accusative plural: the dative is lost in the modern language.

Chevy



Chevy chase, criticised in the Spectator, of Hardiknute, and of other poems, in which it is shown not unfit even for sublime expression.

For the chorusses the Zacynthian has chosen measures of which I have seen no other example in Grecian verse. The prevailing form among them is the Italian epic, the endecasillabo, five-footed hypercatalectic of the even cadence, being the English dramatic with the redundant final syllable, or double ending. This is adorned with rime, in a singular kind of triplet, or stanza of three verses, the middle verse bearing no rime. Verses of six feet and of four feet are scantily intermingled. In the following six lines, from the chorus concluding the fourth act, one six-footed verse occurs. The others are all the ordinary Italian epic, and so harmonious as to excite regret that this form has not been used for the dialogue, for which it is so evidently far more advantageous than that of the preceding example, which has been chosen for it.

Μὰ σὺ γὰρ μέγα πνεύματα δεσπότη,

Ἀληθινὴ τιμὴ γὰρ σέβη δόσματος

Τῶν ὑψίστων Θεῶν χάριτα πρώτη.

Ὡ βασιλεῦ εἰς τοὺς βασιλευούσι,

Ξανάλα τοὺς παρὸν καιροῦς, τὶ δ' ἄλως σένα

Μακάριοι νὰ γενοῦν δὲν ἤμποροῦσι.

Two four-footed verses, of better effect I think than the six-footed, occur among these, the concluding lines of the same chorus :

Ἐλπίζομ', ὅτι τὸ κακὸν ἂν σέύσῃ  
 Μιὰν ὥραν, ὅπότ' ἀπὸ μᾶς δὲ λείψῃ  
 Ἐλπίδα, μὰ διαβῆ καὶ μᾶς ἀφήσῃ.  
 Ἐλπίζομ', ὅτι ὁ ἥλιος, π' ἀποθνήσκει  
 Τὸ βράδι πρὸς τὴ δύση, πάλιν  
 Ἐἰς τὴν ἀνατολὴν ἂν ξαναγένῃ.  
 Κι ὅσο λιγώτερος οὐρανὸς φωτίζει  
 Τὴ λάμπῃ τὴν καρτερετήνῃου,  
 Πάλι συχνὰ σ' ἐμᾶς τήνε γυρίζει.

These two passages in the original run thus :

Ma tu, deh, spirti egregi  
 Forma ne' petti nostri,  
 Verace onor, delle grand' alme donno,  
 O regnator de' regi,  
 Deh, torna in questi chioftri,  
 Che senza te beati esser non ponno.

---

Speriam : che il mal fa tregua  
 Talor se speme in noi non si dilegua.  
 Speriam : che il sol cadente anco rinasce,  
 E' l' ciel, quando men luce,  
 L'aspettato seren spesso n'adduce.

In the year 1526, somewhat more than a century before this translation from the Italian, a translation of Homer's Iliad into modern Greek was printed at Venice. In the title-page it is stated

stated to have been then an old translation, corrected and digested by the publisher; 'Ομήρου Ἰλιάς, μεταβληθεῖσα πάλαι εἰς κοινὴν γλῶσσαν, νῦν δὲ διορθωθεῖσα καὶ διατεθεῖσα συντόμως, παρὰ Νικολάου τοῦ Λουκάνου. And because many old words, no longer in common use, were retained, a glossary is prefixed, explaining those words in the more modern language. The measure is purely modern, and accentual; being that of the Spanish drama, the truncated four-footed, without rime. The beginning runs thus:

Τὴν οργὴν ἄδε καὶ λέγε  
 ὦ Δέαμου Καλιόπη,  
 Τοῦ Πηλείδου Ἀχιλλέως,  
 Πῶς ἐγένετ' ὀλεθρία,  
 Καὶ πολλὰς λύπας ἐποίησε  
 Ἐἰς τοὺς Ἀχαιοὺς, δὴ πάντας,  
 Καὶ πολλὰς ψυχὰς ἀνδρείας  
 Πῶς ἀπέγειλεν εἰς ἄδην,  
 Καὶ κυσὶ καὶ τοῖς ορνέοις  
 Πρὸς βορὰν ἔδωκε τούτους:  
 Ὅ γὰρ Ζεὺς ἠθέλην οὕτως:  
 Ἀφ' οὗ γοῦν φιλογεικοῦντες  
 Ἐχωρίσθησαν ἀλλήλων  
 Ο τε βασιλεὺς Ἀτρεΐδης  
 Καὶ ὁ Ἀχιλλεὺς ταχύπους.

The aberration of the accent occurs, in this passage and through the poem, not unfrequently in the third foot, so as to give the acute to the first syllable of the second hemistich, and rarely in any other part of the verse.



If it might be supposed that the forms of verse, in the preceding examples, were borrowed from the western nations, by a people in the depressed state of the Greeks of the present day, yet in pursuing the investigation upward, we find it otherwise. John Tzetzes was a popular versifier of the Greek empire, with the reputation of a very learned grammarian, toward the end of the twelfth century, about the age of the earliest of the foregoing specimens of English verse of the even cadence. There remains from him what is called ‘a historical book,’ in a kind of verse which has exceedingly puzzled the critics of western Europe in later ages, because it differs widely from all antient Greek verse, and they have given no attention to the verse used by the modern Greeks. The distinguishing term for it, in the days of Tzetzes, was *εἶχοι πολιτικοί*, which, in modern Latin versions is rendered *versus politici*, and in English perhaps may be not improperly translated *vulgar verse*; being verse accommodated to the bulk of the people of the Greek empire in its day, but not what men of education approved. It is precisely the same accentual verse which appears to be most common among the Greeks of the present day, and to have been so from before the age of Tzetzes, namely the seven-footed, composed of two hemistichs, alternately of four feet with the single, and three with the double ending. The seven-footed verse of the translation of the Pastor Fido, and of

the Greek songs of more modern date, differ from it only by their ornament of rime, which, in the age of Tzetzes had not been adopted.

The historical poem, a most incoherent mixture of scraps of history, profane and sacred, with heathen mythology and moral precept, begins thus :

Ἀκριβοστάτως ἐμαθεῖν φίλῳ τε κεχρημένῳ  
 Μῖᾱς ἐμῆς ἐπιστολῆς σύμπασαν ἱστορίαν,  
 Ἐγκεινομένως μάθανε πρῶτον ἐκ τῆς τῶν Κροίσου.  
 Κροῖσος, ὁ Αλυάτῳ, Λυδῶν ἦν βασιλείων,  
 Μητρόπολιν ἀνάκτορον τὰς Σάρδεϊς κεκτημένος.

In these five lines cadence indicated by accent is perfectly obvious ; and so regular, that farther quotation seems as unnecessary to show the kind of verse, as it is for any other purpose little desirable. Aberration of the accent is, throughout the poem, or rather bundle of poems, freely used in the first foot of either verse or hemistic, and scarcely elsewhere : the regularity is fully equal to that of the most scrupulous Italian lyric poets. The difference between these verses and the more modern Greek appears to be scarcely any, beyond the adherence of the elder poet to antient pronuntiation, which the moderns have vitiated by often blending two vowels in one poetical syllable, after the Italian manner. Thus, in the lines from Tzetzes *Μῖᾱς* has two poetical syllables, whereas, in the distic of the  
 Cledona,

Cledona, *μιὰν* is made a single syllable; and this we find the common modern practice; while, nevertheless, for the conveniency of rime, in the first of Mr. Guys' songs, the same word is made two syllables, with the acute accent on the first.

But it particularly deserves notice that this accentual measure, in which Tzetzes wrote for the mass of people of the Greek empire, was not the kind of verse approved by himself, any more than by the men of education of his time in general. We find him, at the end of his book called *Historical*, expressing decidedly his disapprobation of it, and complaining in strong terms, of the growing barbarism, and the already established influence of bad taste, by which it was rendered necessary to those who wrote for the many. Moreover it is highly remarkable that this complaint, addressed to the superior order of readers as an apology for his use of the vulgar verse, is not itself written in vulgar verse, but in iambics; which, with just allowance for ordinary injury in transcription, may be called proper and good. Something seems wanting at the beginning, but the passage, otherwise lucid, is perhaps the most curious extant relating to the history of versification. It stands in the edition printed at Basil, thus:

Μούσης μέτρα φέρουσα τῆς ἀγρυπνίδος,  
Ἡ τὴν ποδῶν εὐρυθμὸν οὐ τηρεῖ βάσιν.

Πάσα;



Πάσας δὲ μισεῖ διχρόνους καὶ τριχρόνους,  
 Κανὼν δὲ τέχνης οὐδαμῶς αὐτῇ φίλος.  
 Καὶ τί<sup>z</sup> γὰρ ἂν τις τεχνικῶ γράφοι μέτρον  
 Ποδᾶς τε τηρῇ παλαιαχθοῦ καὶ διχρόνους,  
 Καὶ πάντα λέπτως, ὡς χρεῶν, ἀποξέοι  
 Ἰσῶν δοκούσων τεχνικῶν καὶ βαρβάρων;  
 Μᾶλλον δὲ πολλοῦ βαρβάρου τιμωμένων,  
 Καὶ τῶν ἀτέχνων ὡς σοφῶν κρατουμένων;  
 Καὶ τᾶντα ποιῶσι; τοῖς δοκοῦσι τανσόφους.  
 Οὕτω τὸ καλὸν ἐξαπέπη τῶν βίου,  
 Οὕτω κατεπράτησεν ἡ χυδασιότης.

Referring

<sup>z</sup> Dr. Foster has observed, tho I apprehend he means to give the credit of the remark to Markland, that τὶ or τί is always short, which would make an imperfection here in iambic measure, but that Tzetzes might have written Διὰ τί, by which the imperfection would be obviated.

\* The Latin translation, by Paul Lacifi of Verona, professing to be literal, is such that it might be wished some translators of the classics, in aiming at Ciceronian eloquence, had not more departed from the sense of their original. The passage in the text is rendered thus:

Musæ metra ferens circulatoricis,  
 Quæ pedum concintum non servat gressum,  
 Omnes autem odit dichronos aut trichronos,  
 Normaque artis nequaquam illi amica.  
 Et quid enim quispiam artificiosa scriberet metro,  
 Pedes autem servaret ubique, et bitemporeos,  
 Et omnia subtiliter, ut opus est, limaret,  
 Cum æquo in honore fuit artificiosa atque barbara?  
 Præcipue autem cum quæ multum barbara sunt æstimentur,  
 Et incondita velut sapientissima dominantur.  
 Et hæc quibus? his qui creduntur sapientissimi.  
 Sic quod honestum est evolavit e vita:  
 Sic ubique prævaluit vilis inscitia.

Dr.

Referring the reader to the note below for two Latin translations of these lines, I would render them

Dr. Foster has, in some degree, garbled the passage. His translation, which corresponds to all that he has given of the original, runs thus :

————— Musæ circulatricis,  
 Quæ pedum concinnum non servat gressum.  
 Quid vero quispiam artificioso scriberet metro,  
 Pedesque servaret ubique, et ancipites literas,  
 Et omnia subtiliter, prout decet, limaret,  
 Cum æquali in honore sint artificiosa et barbara,  
 Et indocta velut docta dominantur ?  
 Et hæc quibus ? iis qui videntur sapientissimi.  
 Sic quod honestum est evanuit ex vita ;  
 Sic ubique valuit vulgaris inscitia.

The more I value Dr. Foster's book, as far as it regards ancient learning, the more I think it material to notice what appear to me errors in it. I totally doubt his *ancipites literas* for διχρόνος. Quintilian teaches us clearly the meaning of the words *tempus* and χρόνος, as used in prosody : ' Even boys know,' he says, ' that ' a short syllable is of one time, a long one of two.' Now if διχρόνος meant a doubtful letter, what was the meaning of τριχρόνος, in the preceding line, which Foster has chosen to omit ? But if διχρόνος meant, not anything doubtful, but a certain measure, namely, as its composition obviously implies, double the measure of a single time, then τριχρόνος of course would mean triple the measure of a single time. Thus, as a short vowel followed by one consonant made a single time, the same vowel followed by two consonants made a double time, διχρόνος ; a long vowel followed by a single consonant made equally a double time ; but a long vowel followed by two con-

them in English, filling also, with my best conjecture, the deficiency at the beginning, in this manner :

‘ Thus far my book has borne the measures of a  
 ‘ strolling muse, careless of the step which a perfect  
 ‘ cadence would direct. She hates the nice dis-  
 ‘ tinctions of double times and triple times: the  
 ‘ rules of antient art are in no favor with her.  
 ‘ And why indeed should any one now write in the  
 ‘ measure which that art prescribes; arranging feet,  
 ‘ observant of double quantities, and polishing all  
 ‘ with scrupulous exactness, when barbarous verse  
 ‘ has equal estimation with classical, or rather the  
 ‘ barbarous has more general favor, and rudeness bears  
 ‘ the prize from taste and learning? And who are  
 ‘ those who lead in these matters? Those esteemed  
 ‘ all-wise! So has the good and fair dropped out  
 ‘ of life: So do vulgarity<sup>b</sup> and ill taste prevail!’

This

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sonants made a triple time, *τρίχρονος*. This last distinction, which, as we learn both from Quintilian and Dionysius, was always noticed by those who professedly inquired about rhythmus, passed ordinarily in verse as only a double time. Nevertheless discretion would no doubt be necessary in the use of it: over-frequently repeated, or in awkward arrangement, it would offend the nicer ear, and hence apparently the mention of it by Tzetzes.

<sup>b</sup> The word *χυδαίωτης*, tho no classical authority appears to be known for it, may nevertheless have been a word of classical times, being regularly formed from the classical word *χυδαίος*. It is translated by Lacini *vilis infcitia*; by Foster, more properly  
 and



This remarkable passage follows the ‘historical book,’ and stands as preface to a poem, in proper iambic verse, on education, which is followed by a short poem in proper epic or heroic verse, and that again by another in proper iambs. Till the final overthrow of the Greek empire by the Turks, in the fifteenth century, we find the classical form of verse was cultivated among the learned, and was alone in favor among them. The epitaph composed for himself by John Lascaris, of the imperial family of Constantinople, acknowledging with gratitude the hospitality which, after that melancholy event, he found at Rome and Florence, while he lamented the fate of his own country, will hardly tire, even those to whom it is known, with repetition here :

Λάσκαρις ἀλλοδαπῇ γαίῃ ἐνικάτθeto, γαίην

“Ουτε λήν ξείνην ᾧ ξένη μεμφόμενος.

“Ευρετο μελιχίην, ἀλλ’ ἄχθεται ἔπειρ’ Ἀχαιοίς

“Ουκ ἔη χοῦν χένει παῖρὶς ἑλευθέριον.”

The

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and yet I think not quite justly, *vulgaris inscitia*. Ignorance, or rather illiterateness, may indeed, without any great violence, be considered as implied in vulgarity; but *vulgarity*, or what is of and belonging to the multitude, seems all that is absolutely expressed by the term *χυδαιότης*. Neither Lacini nor Foster seem to have been aware that the modern Greek language, commonly called by the modern Greek people *Ῥωμαῖκα*, is familiarly termed by the learned among them, when they write, as they are fond of doing, in the antient language, *χυδαία γλώσση*, which seems to answer precisely to our phrase *vulgar-tongue*.

‘Four lines will hardly be found to which it were more difficult to do justice in translation, in any language, than

The longer poem of Marcus Musurus, about the same time addressed to pope Leo the tenth, may be found prefixed to Aldus' edition of Plato, and reprinted by Dr. Foster at the end of his own essay.

Nevertheless long before the age even of Tzetzes, the vulgar verse was become the popular form of verse of the Greek empire. It seems to have been about a century before him that Constantine Manasses wrote his Historical Synopsis, or epitome of universal history, in vulgar verse, accentual verse, as regular, as perfect in its form, as the most polished of modern times, in Greek, in Italian, in English, or any other language. It may indeed be said that Ovid's hexameters and pentameters, and

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these of Lascaris. Doctor Foster has given this poetical version :

Lascaris externa terra jacet; haud tamen ipsi  
De gente externa quod quereretur erat.  
Nec piget hospitii. Dolet hoc, quod Græcia natis  
Amplius haud præstat libera busta suis.

Whether this was his own, or whose, I know not, but for fidelity, as a poetical version, it does its author credit. The learned reader will see the deficiency of the following literal English prose translation, which will yet perhaps not be much mended in any other modern language :

'Lascaris lies here in a foreign soil, where of hospitality  
'failing he had not to complain. He found kindness; but  
'he grieved that, for the Greeks, the land of their fathers was  
'no longer free.'

Horace's

Horace's Sapphics, have an accentual cadence as obvious and as regular as most Italian or English poetry. But we have the fullest assurance that this accentual cadence did not make the essence of those verses. Probably it was gratifying to Roman ears, as an ornament of the measure, nearly as rime is gratifying to Italian and English ears, also as ornament, tho it cannot of itself constitute verse. But the Greek vulgar verse has no regularity in the arrangement of quantities. Simple measure of time therefore cannot possibly have been the constituent of the vulgar verse, the *versus politici*, as it was of the classical verse. On the other hand the arrangement of accents being as regular as in any modern accentual verse, and being also the same as in the most modern Greek verse, there can be no question but that accent was the regulator of the measure.

Traced in full perfection thus high, it seems beyond a doubt that the accentual verse of the Greeks originated in the east, and did not arise from any influence that the practice of the western nations obtained over Grecian taste. From what other language it was borrowed, or whether from any, seems uncertain. It may have arisen from the stile of music which gained favor, and its reception would at least be promoted by the practice of accompanying dance with song; for music to accompany dancing, as we have formerly observed, requires more particularly a powerful indication



indication of cadence, with which song, without a time-beating arrangement of the accents of its words, would ill accord.<sup>d</sup>

<sup>d</sup> At the early age when doctor Foster's book on Accent and Quantity first engaged my attention, a note of his excited my curiosity greatly, and led me to great disappointment: 'There is 'mentioned by Fabricius,' he says, 'Bibl. Græc. lib. v. c. 7. 'p. 48, a manuscript piece of this Tzetzes, intitled *Versus politici de pedibus & metris poeticis*, in Bibl. Vindob. et Cod. 'Barocc. 131. Fabric. in the same book, p. 17, 18, mentions 'likewise a MS. of his, *de omni versuum genere, et de versibus 'politicis*. MS. Reg. 84. A sight of this last piece would 'probably clear up this matter at once.' p. 202 of the second edition. By *this matter* the doctor means the question, whether accent has been the regulating power of the cadence, or, as he phrases it, has governed the quantities, of the *versus politici*? 'On this supposition,' he says, 'most of the *versus politici* are 'tetrameter iambic catalectic, but,' he adds, 'he strongly suspects that instead of iambs regulated by accent, they are 'rather loose trochaics, as independent of it as any in Euripides.'

Going to Paris in the year 1777, about three years after the first publication of my *Thoughts on the Harmony of Language*, I was eager to get a sight of this work of John Tzetzes; not having, even then, any doubt of the real character of the *versus politici*, or, of course, of the absurdity of the learned question whether they were iambs or trochaics, but expecting to find from a Greek, writing while the classical Greek was yet a living speech, what had never been given by any of more modern times, a just account of the nature of accentual verse, and of its differences from verse of quantity. I had an advantageous introduction to the king's librarian from my learned friend Mr. de Villoison, and four copies of the work of Tzetzes were laid before me; the oldest of the fourteenth century, the latest of the sixteenth. I looked over all, so far

as to be satisfied that not a syllable concerning the structure of the *versus politici* was to be found among them. But, tho thus disappointed, I had the satisfaction to find what had led Fabricius into the mistake which had so vainly excited doctor Foster's curiosity and mine. All the four manuscripts bore this title : *Διδασκαλία σαφιστάτη Ἰωάννου γραμματικῶν Τζίτζου περὶ τῶν ἐν εἴχοις μέτρων ἀπάντων, διὰ εἴχων πολιτικῶν, τὰ δὲ προοιμία μὲν διὰ εἴχων ἡρωικῶν.* Accordingly the proem, addressed to the author's brother and son, is found in proper hexameter heroics, and the body of the work follows in vulgar verse, *versus politici*. But in the manuscript of the 16th century, and in that only, between the proem and the body of the work, are these words, evidently the interpolation of the transcriber, *Τοῦ αὐτοῦ περὶ εἴχων πολιτικῶν.* It is manifest that *περὶ* has been written carelessly for *διὰ*, and hence Fabricius's phrase *de versibus politicis*. What follows is *in* vulgar verse, *versus politici*, without a syllable *about* them.

In my note, made at the time, I find it stated that the work in vulgar verse begins with describing the antient feet, classing them as dissyllabical, trissyllabical, and tetrasyllabical. It proceeds then to verses, iambic, hexoic, and others commonly known, to the number of nine, as of principal use. A tenth, called *Æolic*, is described as a kind of rarity. Then follows an article *περὶ τοῦ καλουμένου λογαοδικῶς μέτρου.* This verse is said to be hexameter, but differing from the common hexameter in two points, both circumstances of quantity. After this ample account of the various kinds of verses in common use among the poets using cadence measured by quantities only, follows an article intitled *περὶ ἀποδείσεων τῶν μέτρων*, at the beginning of which the author inveys vehemently against the barbarism of the writers of his day : *Βάρβαροι, Θρᾷκες ὄντες*, he says, they were continually vitiating the Greek language with the introduction of new words. The work is then concluded with an article *περὶ τῆς ἐπιπλοκῆς τῶν μέτρων παρ' ἄλληλα.* Had I the opportunity now, which a variety of inviting objects led me then to neglect, at least so far that I have preserved neither

note nor recollection of any particulars of this last article, I should have more curiosity for it than for any of the others; for a just explanation of the antient mixtures of poetical measures could hardly fail to carry with it some elucidation of the character of antient music, and of the connection of antient music with poetry.

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#### ARTICLE 5.

##### *Of Oriental and Celtic Versification.*

IT would require an intimate acquaintance with the living sounds of the eastern dialects, for the written letter alone can do little, to form any opinion of the character of their versification. The learned bishop Hare's idea of explaining Hebrew versification by the laws of the Greek and Latin, is an extravagance on one side, and the perhaps more learned and more elegantly critical bishop Lowth's idea that Hebrew poetry was prose, and yet was the finest of all poetry, is an opposite and even a greater extravagance, into which men of their sound ability could not have given, had they been more practised in the various speech of men, and less habituated to form their notions of language from converse with the dead letter only in their libraries. The modern Arabic, daughter certainly or sister of the Hebrew, is a language so  
extensively



extensively spoken, much more than any other on earth, that dialects cannot fail to vary much in it. But from what little I have been able to gather, mostly of the dialects of Syria and Egypt, I should suppose that its verse is accentual. It would however be far too much thence to infer that the verse of the Hebrews was accentual, because we know that the verse of the modern Italians and modern Greeks is accentual, and the verse of their ancestors was not so. The verse of the Hebrews and Chaldees may have been regulated by simple measure of time, as that of the Greeks and Latins was, and yet the attempt to reduce their verses, without knowing anything of their pronuntiation, to Greek and Latin rules, will be nevertheless absurd. It appears however likely that the power of accent to regulate cadence was introduced among the Greeks of the latter empire, together with figurative diction, to the overthrow of just measure of time and simplicity of expression, from the east. Of the poetry of the Hebrews, no reasonable doubt can be entertained that it was verse, distinguished by regularity of measure from prose; but it may possibly, or, we might perhaps venture to say, not improbably, have had accent for its principal regulator.

The Welsh language has been reckoned by some to have affinity with the Greek; and the Welsh themselves have been fond of claiming this relationship. As far as I have had opportunity to  
look

look into languages, I have been able to discover but two distinct kinds, or, in the technical term borrowed from the Latin, genera, within the limits of Persia, eastward, and not going beyond the Atlantic, westward. The Chinese no doubt is a distinct kind. What the Malay, the Hindoo, the Sanscrit and others may be, I know not. But among the nations westward of India, I think all may be arranged in affinity with either the Greek or the Hebrew. Whether the Hebrew or the Chaldee have the better claim to patriarchal dignity, for the present question matters not, or whether the Greek or the Sclavonic. All the Teutonic dialects, which pervade modern Europe so extensively, together with the Latin and the antient Persic, are of the same genus with the Greek. The antient Chaldee, Syriac, Punic, and Celtic, with its modern branches, the Welsh, Erse or Gaelic (including Irish and Highland Scotch) Breton, and I believe Biscayan, tho this I have not been able to ascertain, are of the same genus with the Hebrew. Words indeed are found in the Welsh language, which appear to have affinity with Greek words; and so very many Greek have affinity with Hebrew words. It is matter of wonder whence the wide and characteristical difference in the construction of the languages, and the very great superiority of the Greek can have arisen; but the characteristical differences are obviously very great; and the Welsh bears strong

characteristical marks of affinity with the Hebrew, and none of affinity with the Greek, of any probable later date than the separation of the Greek itself from the Hebrew.

The mechanism of Welsh verse, as far as I have been able to gather, is clearly accentual. This cannot have been derived from the Latin of old, whose verse was not accentual but of quantity; nor is there any shadow of probability that it has been borrowed from the English. We know not therefore where to look for its origin but to the antient Britons. One remark more only upon a subject which I am ill qualified to prosecute: The antient Welsh airs, which have been transmitted traditionarily by ignorant harpers, and all belong to songs, have all that marked accentuation which might fit them for dance; which indicates strongly that the verse to which they were adapted was powerfully marked by accent.

I will however venture an observation less immediately belonging to the subject. In the antient Scottish airs, which are justly admired for their very peculiar yet beautiful melody, there is no modulation, no change of key. But in the Welsh, even the most imperfect fragments, the air often highly beautiful, tho' far less striking for its peculiarity, we find change of key frequent, and sometimes very artificial modulation, such as the modern composer might not disadvantageously emulate. Have both been derived from a common



mon origin, the Greek music, brought into Britain by the Romans? And has not the peculiar character of the Scottish arisen from the defective powers of the only instrument retained by fugitives among the bleak and stormy highlands, the bagpipe, while the Welsh, holding the triple harp, but in their poverty and their troubles among their mountains, tho in a better climate, unable duly to cultivate so complex and troublesome, yet sweet and powerful an instrument, preserved ruins of a higher stile of music, but only ruins?

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#### ARTICLE 6.

*Of the Change of the Mechanism of Verse, from that of the Latin to that of the modern Languages derived from the Latin.*

MEANS are not extant for tracing the dialects of modern Italy, and the kindred languages, up to the Latin, as the modern to the antient Greek. The void is wide; but in the decaying Latin, which remains to us, may be traced a tendency toward the character which pervades the daughters of the Latin; character of pronuntiation as well as character of phrase.

The first difference which has made itself obvious to scholars, has arisen from the separation of  
the

the eastern and western empires. In the best age of the Latin language, the Augustan age, the best poets, as we have formerly observed from Quintilian, were fond of varying the uniformity of the Latin accentuation by the introduction of Greek names ; and, as every pretender to polite learning cultivated the Greek language, those names, so introduced in Latin poetry, retained, in recitation, the Greek accent ; otherwise the poet's purpose would have failed. But when, after the separation of the empires, and the decay of learning amid violent troubles, the Greek language was no longer cultivated in the west, the pronuntiation of the Greek words adopted in the Latin language, and of Greek names in general, would of course yield to the Latin idiom. The accentuation both of the Greek and of the Latin, having been decided by the disposition of quantities among the syllables of words, but under different rules, when the proper Greek pronuntiation was lost, either the Greek accentuation of those words would be changed for one accommodated to Latin rule, or, to bring the words to the Latin character, without changing the place of the acute accent, the quantity must be altered. Commonly then, we find, the accent was retained, and the quantity altered. Thus in the name *Helena*, the acute being on the penultimate, that syllable was lengthened ; and under the same rule, in the name *Philippus*, the acute being on the ante-penultimate, the penultimate would be

be shortened. Italian, Spanish, and modern Greek, agree in the accentuation of this name, tho differing in orthography, *Filippo*, *Félope*, *Φίλιππος*.

Such instances might be easily multiplied. But among many names of places in the kingdom of Naples, retaining to this day their Greek accentuation against Latin rule, *Posílippo* and *Táranto* are remarkable; the former because the place was so surrounded by the favorite residences of the Roman great of the Augustan and following ages, the other, because in Roman writing, and equally no doubt in speaking, it was altered to a Roman form requiring a different accentuation, *Taréntum*. Some instances in the north of Italy are striking from different circumstances. The few Grecian colonies there, scattered along the coast by the Massilians, widely separated from the mother-country, and secluded among barbarians, probably lost the Greek language in the earliest irruptions of the Gothic hords. Nevertheless *Mónaco*, in a situation hardly to be approached by land, has, amid corruption in articulation and in orthography, preserved its Greek accentuation from *Μόναικος*, the antient name; and it has been in vain that the Latin form *Nicaea* would require the acute on the penultimate; the Greek accentuation of *Νίκαια*, demanding the acute on the antepenultimate, has so preponderated, that, whether in Roman or in barbarian mouths, the long penultimate has dropped from the name, which remains in Italian *Nizza*, in  
French



French *Nice*. On an eminence among the mountains between these two little cities, is the village of *Torbia*, a name formed from the Greek *Τρόπαια*. Here also the Latin *Trophæa*, would require the acute on the penultimate. Nevertheless, tho letters have been inverted, the Greek accent holds its place. The concurrence of these examples, scattered on a coast of inhospitable mountains, with those remaining among the rich and highly peopled southern Italian colonies, and of both with the practice of the modern Greeks, is a kind of phenomenon that may be thought not unworthy the observation of those who have curiosity for the history of languages.

Thus it seems likely enough that some of the earliest corruptions of Latin quantity arose among the Greek words which had been adopted in the language. But the growing carelessness about quantity, and superior respect for accent, introduced by the Gothic conquerors, was probably not a little promoted by the stile of music, of more poignancy than delicacy, and of cadence strongly marked, likely to have been most relished by them. At the same time the pronuntiation of words would often receive change, while the orthography remained; and possibly to this should, in many cases, be attributed the extreme irregularity of some of the later Roman versification, in which even two consonants following a vowel do not insure the length of the syllable. This has excited  
strong

strong expression of contempt from some modern scholars ; whom yet perhaps Cicero and Quintilian would admonish to inquire whether, in the pronuntiation of the day, two consonants were given to the ear, before they undertake to say that the poet has put a long syllable for a short one. On comparing the modern language of Italy with the Latin, it will appear highly probable that, in the middle ages, some consonants, which nevertheless held their place in orthography, were no longer heard in delivery ; a circumstance not a little too familiar in English orthography. It must follow that, in those ages, versification for the mass of the people, tho still resting on quantity, could no longer be precisely the versification of Virgil and Ovid. As troubles and revolutions then were repeated, as the original race of inhabitants became less, and the new settlers more numerous, the pronuntiation would become more corrupted, and the popular versification must of necessity accommodate itself to the pronuntiation of the day. At length the accentual cadence, which is commonly found in Virgil, and scarcely ever fails in Ovid, becoming the only cadence marked by the voice, the better cadence of quantity ceased not only to be perceived, but even understood. To adorn the accentual cadence, rimes were added and the hexameter became a couplet. Thus when the change of language was finally completed from the antient Latin to the modern Tuscan, it was a very advantageous

vantageous change accompanying it, which established the poetical measures of Petrarca and Tasso, not on the ruin of those of Horace and Virgil, which no longer held other existence than in writing, but of a wretched burlesk of them.

The few words which, in the first revival of letters in Italy, the Italians adopted from the Greek, then still a living language with its accentuation unquestioned, would be likely to hold their Greek tones. Thus the word *idéa*, used so early as by Petrarca, has been transmitted equally in Italian and in English with its Grecian accentuation undisturbed. The names *María* and *Sophía* afford similar example: nor is quantity here at all violated even in English pronuntiation, but on the contrary, if modern scholars will acute the word σοφία, after the Latin rule, on the antepenultimate, then, if they use the ordinary manner of English delivery, they will falsify the quantity by making that syllable long.

But Italian speech affords examples of Grecian accentuation in words which it must apparently have received through the Latin, as in *Armonía*; and the Spanish seems to have had, in its early days, a still stronger tendency to the Grecian practice. Why a speech derived from the Latin should acute the names *Lucía* and *Andalusía* after the Grecian manner, is not obvious. In the name *Isidro*, contracted from *Isídωρος*, the intire dismissal of the penultimate syllable, formed with a long



vowel supported by a following consonant, is a still greater violence on quantity, in favor of accent, than the dismissal of vowels preceding vowels, in the Italian names *Nizza* and *Torbia*.

When the former articles of this section were committed to the press, I was wholly unaware of a claim made by some German poets of the present age. It is to the Italian translator of the *Iliad*, Cesarotti, I owe the information that they have undertaken, in their rough language, to give, not only the hexameter verse of the Greek and Latin, but all the lyrical measures of Horace and even of Pindar; and this not in small and probationary attempts only, like those in which Sidney failed, as all must fail, in our tongue, but in whole epic poems, and a complete version of Horace's odes. But Cesarotti adds, 'It must however be confessed that the Latino-Germanic prosody differs somewhat from the antient; and indeed I have difficulty to believe that Horace and Virgil would know their own measures so Germanized.'<sup>a</sup> In these

<sup>a</sup> 'I Tedeschi, più laboriosi ed ostinati degl' Italiani, a forza d'insistenza, pretendono d'esser giunti a rappresentar, nel loro verso, tutti i metri de' Latini e de' Greci. Il celebre Klopstock, oltre aver posta la sua *Messiad*e in verso esametro, scrisse anche alcune ode collo spirito e coi metri lirici di Pindaro. Il Prof. Ramler dell' Accad. di Berlino, ha, per così dire, rigenerato Orazio, conservandogli, nella lingua Tedesca, il genio, lo stile, e spesso anche l'armonia sillabica. Convien però confessare che le regole della prosodia Latino-Germanica sono

these opinions I cannot but agree with the learned Italian; and indeed, combining what I have been able to gather from others, concerning German versification, with the small observation for which I have had opportunity myself, and adding, what is abundantly obvious, the complete confusion of accent and quantity in all the writings of the ablest German scholars on the subject, nearly the same which has been made by Italian and English scholars, and which has not equally been made by the French, I cannot doubt the superiority of accent, and the utter impotence of quantity, as regulator of that harmony of which the German language is capable, and principal efficient of its verse. Nor will it be any disgrace to the German, and other dialects of Teutonic origin, to agree in this with the English, which is a sister-speech, and with the Italian, Spanish, and Romanesk, which were compelled to depose the ruling power of the harmony of their parent language, and receive new laws of verse from the Teutonic conquerors.

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‘ sono alquanto diverse d’all’ antica; ed ho pena a credere che  
‘ l’orecchie di Virgilio e d’Orazio riconoscessero il loro metro  
‘ germanizzato.’

## SECTION XVI.

## Of EUPHONY and CACOPHONY.

ACCORDING to our preceding definitions Euphony and Cacophony, in language, mean sound pleasing and unpleasing, considered as it may exist in syllables uncombined, or in the transition from syllable to syllable, and therefore independent of harmonical results. Nevertheless as the finest music, exhibited on a coarse instrument, may offend rather than gratify the ear, so if euphony is deficient in a language, but still more, if cacophony abounds, any powers of harmony it may possess will fail of their just effect.

Euphony arises chiefly from vowels, cacophony from consonants. But a language consisting of only vowels would pall on the ear, as unmixed sweets on the palate. Among instruments it would most resemble the musical glasses; which, with all the great powers they possess, quickly satiate: even the flute has, for most ears, too untempered a sweetness. Consonants therefore are necessary, not only to mark divisions of vowels, not only to add force to the faint effect of vowels, but through their very asperity to relieve the tediousness of continued softness.

Euphony then, simply considered, may perhaps be affirmed to exist in vowel sound only; but euphony,



phony, in extended recitation, depends on the just mixture of vowel and consonant sounds. In this just mixture, as in most other points, the ancient Greek language seems to have excelled all others known to have been spoken. The Hebrew was so harsh, and the congenial dialects of Chaldea, Syria, and Arabia, had a similar character, that we find Josephus confessing he was ashamed to exhibit their sounds by representation of Grecian characters. The Latin had powerful harmony, but not without a considerable mixture of harsh sound, which has possibly been too much polished away by its fairest daughter, the Italian. The sounds of the Greek language may be compared to those of a fine violin; joining the greatest sweetness with the most various powers: the sounds of the Latin may be compared to those of a harsh violin, of power still great, but less various, and of far less engaging sweetness: the sounds of the Italian resemble those of a fine flute, the sweetness exquisite, but the power inferior. The French, for its nasal tones and want of effect of accent, might perhaps be compared to the bagpipe; or to that organ-stop which has most of the nasal effect of the bagpipe; both wanting the powers of accent. I am at a loss for an instrument to which to compare the English, because its virtues and its vices are both so great. For both, the opinions of foreigners will deserve much consideration. In an account of Paris, lately published, it is said,

‘ The French complain that the English speak so much between their teeth, that they cannot understand them :’ adding, in their own quaint expression, ‘ l’Anglois est la seule langue pour qui il ne faut pas une langue.’ It is impossible not to acknowledge that there is much justice in this imputation. Yet I am inclined to think that we are not a little indebted to the French themselves for the habit of speaking thus indistinctly. For a century past, the fashion of learning to speak French, as a part of very early education, has been growing among us ; but more especially in the last half century, it has been, for girls, universal : those who learn anything, learn at least a little French. It is a remark of Cicero that the purity of the speech delivered from our forefathers has been everywhere best preserved among women. What then is likely to be the effect of the cultivation of the French language upon our speech ? The first direction, commonly given, in teaching French pronuntiation, is to open the mouth for the letter *a* ; but not so wide as for our own first vowel : therefore, tho the open *a* is of more frequent occurrence in French than in English, yet in the way of power to open the mouth, nothing is gained. Of the next vowel, *e*, the pronuntiation in French is various : but it is for the feminine *e*, a sound peculiar to the French language, that instruction is most wanted by foreigners, and this is not among the sounds that will open the

mouth,

mouth, or give any grace to pronuntiation. The Frenchman who was witty upon the muttering of the English within their teeth, and the needlessness of a tongue for speaking their language, was, no doubt, from habit, unconscious of the character of such phrases in his own language as ‘*je ne le veux pas; cela ne se peut pas.*’ The sonorous brevity of the corresponding phrases in Italian, ‘*non lo voglio: non si può,*’ might startle him. The French *u* has much difficulty for all foreigners; for none more than Italians; but neither is that a vowel to open the mouth; on the contrary it requires a protrusion of the lips, for which I have known a French teacher give direction by a very apt similitude, too coarse for mention here.

Giving however some credit to French criticism on the vices of English pronuntiation, I will quote a learned and able foreigner of another country for its virtues, but its virtues of three centuries ago. Polydore Vergil, legate of Rome at the court of king Henry the seventh, and afterward cardinal, in his History of England, quoted always with respect by our best historians, observes that three languages were spoken in Britain; the English, the Welsh, and the Erse. For their comparative merits he could judge only of the sound; but the terms in which he attributes superior euphony to the English deserve notice: ‘*Angli, Latinos recte imitantes, parum infra labia vocem exprimunt,*



‘*quæ audientibus suavem reddit sonum.*’ If it might be supposed that he had here in view the negative merit only of freedom from the harsh gutturals of Welsh and Highland Scottish pronunciation, a few pages onward he shows clearly that he meant higher eulogy: ‘*Angli,*’ he says, ‘*sono linguæ Italis perfimiles*<sup>a</sup>.’ The testimony altogether is clear, that the sounds of English speech, in that age, were soft and pleasant to an Italian ear, and that the character of the pronuntiation nearly resembled the Italian. The question remains, whether the present speech preserves this advantageous character, or in what points it has degenerated?

I have had occasion heretofore to notice the mistakes often made for want of keeping clearly distinct, in mind and in expression, uttered sounds, and letters the representatives of those sounds. I remember to have found a notion prevalent among some learned and informed Italians at Rome, that the Scotch had a greater facility for Italian pronuntiation than the English; which could not but surprize anybody acquainted with Scottish accentuation, so widely different from anything Italian, and with the difficulty which those bred in Scotland have to accommodate their organs to any other manner of tones. It presently however appeared

<sup>a</sup> Pol. Verg. Hist. Angl. l. 1. p. 15 and 29. Ed. Duaci, 1603.

that this notion was founded on nothing more than that those educated in Scotland, just as those till of very late years educated at Winchester, had been taught, in reading Latin, to give to the several vowel characters nearly the Italian enunciation, which is not the practice of English scholars in general. And I found, upon questioning particularly the old Roman formerly mentioned, that Scotchmen who had come early to Rome, bringing with them the accent of their country, pronounced Italian still, after thirty years practice there, in his opinion, very ill ; but younger men, who had conversed early among Englishmen, so as to have lost their Scottish accentuation, spoke it well. For English speech possesses every vowel sound used by the Italians, tho its sounds are often very differently represented by written letters ; and that its accentuation bears the same affinity with the Italian as formerly, its versification clearly shows. Thus far therefore the general resemblance of sound, in the two languages, probably remains nearly as it stood three centuries ago.

But if we proceed farther to compare our present with our elder versification, we shall find innovations, whence, in some points, the resemblance must be now less close, and the language is become at the same time less deserving of the learned cardinal's eulogy, and more obnoxious to the Frenchman's sneer. Perhaps the versification of Spenser, tho he wrote later, may, for the idiom he

chose, be among the best keys remaining to the English pronuntiation of Polydore Vergil's time.

Let us take then the following lines :

Scarce had he said, when hard at hand they spy

That quicksand nigh, with water covered.

But by the checked wave they did descry

It plain, and by the sea discolored.

It called was the quicksand of Unthrifithead.

Fairy Queen, b. 2. c. 12. v. 18.

The verse here necessarily requires the pronuntiation of that syllable of the words *covered*, *checked*, *discolored*, and *called*, which the modern fashion of speech, discarding its vowel, has abolished, tho the modern fashion of orthography retains its full representation. In Shakespear's age, tho the practice of eliding the vowel in delivery was evidently already ordinary in familiar communication, yet the advantage of retaining it, for solemn subjects, was still permitted to the poet. The following passage, whether Shakespear's or not, being of his age, may serve for example :

This dreadful lord,

Retiring from the siege of Orleäns,

Was round incompassed and set upon.

No leisure had he to inrank his men.

He wanted pikes to set before his archers :

Instead whereof sharp stakes pluckt out of hedges

They pitched in the ground confusedly.

Part I. of king Henry vi. Act 1.

Here the measure indicates the same difference of elder from modern pronuntiation, in the words  
*incompassed*,



*incompassed, pitched, and confusedly*, as in those before noticed in the passage from Spenser. The pronuntiation of the vowel *e* being allowed, as it was when the passages were written, and as it must be still to make them verse, the words will have no difficulty for an Italian voice to articulate, nor for Italian orthography nearly to represent. But the modern elision produces a harshness at which Italian organs revolt : we are ourselves unable to pronounce *pitch'd* : in articulation we are reduced to substitute a *t* for the orthographical *d*. For distinct representation also, not only Italian, but our own orthography fails. The modern use of the mark of elision, splitting words offensively for the eye, and embarrassing the indication of sound, as in *confus'dly*, has, fortunately for our language, not yet obtained universal acceptance. Perhaps the word *confusedly*, euphonous with its four syllables complete, might yet be allowed to a poet ; but, in the want of means to assure the reader's eye at once that four syllables are intended, there might be some hazard of his indignation at what might appear, at first sight, a defective verse.

In the second passage we find an elision in the word *pluckt*, and boldly presented by substituting the *t*, which articulation requires, for the orthographical *d*, which, deprived of the preceding vowel, cannot be articulated. A very cacophonous termination indeed is thus produced ; the ill effect of which however, by judicious arrangement, is obviated ;

viated; for a vowel following, without an intervening pause, the harsh combination of *k* and *t*, does not stand as a termination, nor ungracefully check the flow of the voice into a sound produced without effort of organ. The spirit of Italian euphony indeed, too fastidious, refuses the mute *c* a place before the mute *t*, even in the middle of words, and for the Latin *c*, so situated, substitutes another *t*; as in *fatto*, *petto*, *frutto*, from *factus*, *pectus*, *fructus*. But the Greek did not wholly refuse the variety and force for which such combinations afford means. Never indeed allowing a mute to terminate a word, it will not, like the Latin *plectit* and *plectunt*, countenance the phrase *pluckt-out*. Taking however the phrase *intire*, *pluckt-out-of hedges*, the incipient vowels throughout obviating the harshness of the terminating consonants, it has perhaps hardly more cacophony than some Greek phrases.

It has been remarked by Samuel Johnson and Gregory Sharpe, that the letter *e* is the letter of most common occurrence in human speech. If those learned men would have gone on to say of which of the various sounds represented by that character, in the various languages in whose orthography it is found, they meant to speak, it might be possible to decide whether we admit or deny the assertion. In the two neighboring languages of England and France only, from the English *e* in *me*, through the French in *mes*, *me*, *en*, and the English again in *there*, *men*, *err*, the range is wide.

But

But I believe that in Italian, the vowel represented by the letter *a*, will rival in frequency of occurrence that represented by the letter *e*, and it is the vowel to which Dionysius of Halicarnassus attributes precedence in merit. How much more the Italian pronuntiation affects that sound than the French, may be gathered from a comparison of the French verb *aimer* with the Italian *amare*, through their moods and tenses; or, for a pleasanter example, we may take the following stanza of Tasso, describing what we write a reveillé, and our honest soldiers, who cannot twist their mouths to French pronuntiation, call a revally:

Gia l'aura messagiera erasi desta  
 Per annunziar che se ne vien l'Aurora.  
 Ella in tanto s'adorna, e l'aurea testa  
 Di rose colte in Paradiso infiora.  
 Quando il campo, che a l'arme omai s'appresta,  
 In voce mormorava alta e sonora,  
 E prevenia le trombe, e queste puoi  
 Dier piu lieti e canori i segni suoi.

This frequency of the noblest of the vowels, in the Italian language, appears to have been derived, through the Latin, from the Æolian and Dorian Greek. It is apt to strike Englishmen, on first going into Italy, as producing too much vociferation; a kind of bawling effect. In the declamation of the theater, even at Florence, while new to me, I remember it appeared too predominating: the Attic Greek never had an equal proportion of  
 the



the same sound. Nevertheless it certainly assists much to obviate the character of effeminacy, which might arise from the deficient proportion of consonant sounds in Italian speech.

The fault of the English, in point of euphony, is exactly the reverse of the Italian. The noble sound of the first vowel is scarce, and consonants overabound. But it is in terminations only that they so abound as to produce considerable cacophony; and here the French, it must be allowed, has a great superiority. In other points the French has great and peculiar defects. The French language is singular in the possession of that offensive vowel, which can only be described as the French *u*; no known alphabet having a character or combination of characters to represent it. The French is also remarkable for the possession of that other sound, which, tho not at all a consonant, is hardly half a vowel, incapable of production, incapable of connection with a following consonant, called by French grammarians the feminine *e*. It is moreover remarkable for its nasal sound, indicated by the letter *n*, still more offensive than either of the former. Tho indicated only by a consonant character the French critics appear justly to assert that it is not a consonant, but merely a nasal affection of the preceding vowel. All these are of very frequent occurrence in the language, and form the characteristical features of its sound, which distinguish it, at wide distance, from all other languages.

guages. The difference between the hissing mutter of the pronoun *je* in French, and the clear sweetness of the correspondent pronoun *io* in Italian, *yo* in Spanish, if they are derived from the same Latin word, is extraordinary.

The language of our Anglosaxon forefathers had many cacophonous terminations, and modern speech has not only preserved but very considerably added to them. Hume, partial to France, has unfoundedly asserted that the greatest and best part of the English language has been derived from the French; and Johnson, who more than reasonably hated and abused the French, has, apparently through idleness, deferred more to the French language in the derivation of our words, than on just examination will be found to be warranted. The form of the English language has hardly in any degree been derived from the French. Numerous words indeed have been introduced from it. But it would be easy to show that a very large proportion of those originating from the Latin, have not passed through that to which Johnson has negligently referred them, a French medium: moreover among those which have come through the French, are some of the most cacophonous of our language. We may take for instance the word *judge*. This, bad enough certainly, is however not worse than the French, whence it comes; till, in using it as a verb, we add the consonant indicating the past tense, without allowing sound to the vowel which should proceed,

proceed, as in *judg'd*. Then it must be confessed that French cacophony has nothing resembling it. Nevertheless it may deserve observation what part of this cacophony we owe to the French. In borrowing kindred words immediately from the Latin we get no such cacophony: instead of *judge*, *judg'd*, *judgement*, we have *adjudicate*, *adjudicator*, *adjudicated*, *adjudication*.

It is remarkable that some of our most cacophonous terminations are derived from the most euphonous language ever spoken; but then they come through a bad medium, the French. It must however be acknowledged that tho the medium is bad, tho the grace of the original is wholly lost in it, yet the French words have been formed with a just consideration of analogy in their own language; cacophonous indeed, yet they are adapted to pronuntiation by French mouths. But the words adopted in English, *catechism*, *mechanism*, and all others in *ism*, have no analogy with any old English words, nor are orthographically pronounceable. The common people therefore ordinarily take the not unfair liberty of dismissing the final *m*, of which they do not understand the use, and pronounce *catechiz*. Politer English pronuntiation, not yet become so French as to admit the feminine *e* at the end of the word, yet, in its effort to pronounce the *m* after the *s*, is compelled to the use of that half articulate vowel, or something very like it, where no letter is orthographically acknowledged,



leged, between the *s* and the *m*: thus we imitate the French so far as to make the combination altogether more than one syllable and yet less than two. Had analogy and euphony been at all together considered, we have, within our language, what might have indicated the means of accommodating both. The power, admitted in some cases, of writing a *y* to be pronounced, instead of an *e* to be silent, often accommodates euphony greatly; as *conveniency* and *redundancy*, for *convenience* and *redundance*. If indeed the Latin termination in *tia* were required to authorize the English termination in *y*, it would not answer for the addition of that vowel to the words *catechism* and *mechanism*. But the spirit of formation of words received in English speech has not been always so scrupulous; and it would have been advantageous for the language, if, in derivation, and in everything, it had more asserted an analogy of its own, instead of servilely deferring, in the fashion too much sanctioned even by Samuel Johnson, to the rules or practice of other tongues.

The consideration of euphony and cacophony might lead into length far beyond what would be suitable here. I will therefore touch upon one point only more. The hissing sound of *s* has always been reckoned among the most ungraceful of consonants, and yet it abounds in most languages. It is frequent in euphonous Greek; more frequent in Latin; far

less in the modern Italian, and yet, even there sometimes very pointedly forced upon the ear, standing alone as indicant of the negative in composition, instead of the Latin syllable *dis*. But in Spanish, one of the most euphonous of modern speeches, *s* abounds. Its frequency has sometimes been reckoned among the disgraces of the English. I think not its simple frequency, but rather the combinations in which it is found, is among the disgraces of the English. *S* is among those letters which antient grammarians intitled *SERVILE*. It has been observed, on a former occasion, that *s* is the only consonant which can be combined by the voice in pronuntiation with two other consonants. It has such aptitude to coalesce in pronuntiation with other consonants, that it is capable of supplying the place often of that obscure vowel sound, nearly resembling the French feminine *e*, which will follow a mute consonant, if nothing else follows. Hence apparently the extension of that inelegant corruption, now rapidly spreading from the speech of the vulgar of the metropolis, by which an *s* is continually added to words to which it of no right belongs, generally at the end, but, in compound words, often in the middle. In spite of Johnson, and all our best lexicographers, numerous words are enriched with a final *s* unknown to our forefathers.

To all terminations, formerly in *ward*, as *inward*, *forward*, *toward*, an added *s* begins to obtain even in classical books. A learned lawyer would not write *a sessions* for *a session*: but his editor will print it so. It is curious to observe how corruption arises. Session and Summons are words commonly coming into use together. Session is from *Sessio*, Summons from *Summonitio*, and, analogy considered, were perhaps more properly written *summonce*. But the *s*, having obtained in the singular of summons, has crept into use as an addition to the proper singular of *session*; and now in the same learned law-books, where we find authority for writing *a sessions*, we find also authority for writing, instead of the old verb *to summon*, the new verb *to summons* <sup>b</sup>.

The sounds which we are accustomed to hear in the speech of the polite, gain favor with our ears, as the dresses of the prevailing fashion in our eyes; but if we divest ourselves of this prejudice, we shall

<sup>b</sup> A most curious instance of the despotism exercised in these matters by the editors, occurs in the quarto edition of Johnson's Dictionary. The verb *to summon* is given, in its proper place, without a hint of any authority for a final *s*: yet under the word *bring*, among the explanations, occurs the verb *to summons*, with the *s* added. Johnson being thus made to furnish authority against himself and against all the authorities to which he has referred, it is no wonder that learned lawyers, who have little leisure for such little matters, should have been unable, in their publications, to defend their language against such inelegant corruption. This instance, tho' among the most remarkable, is far from being singular in its kind.



often find an attention to euphony in the speech of the vulgar, which in polite speech has given way to cacophony not more reasonable than the buckram coats and immense periwigs, and pinching stays and cumbrous hoops, long since justly exploded. The modern vulgarism ‘I say,’ is offensive only on account of the mouths it is commonly heard from: with foreigners unacquainted with its vulgarity, it will have due credit for euphony. The deficiencies of our grammars, formed after those of other languages, without just investigation of our own, has led to cacophony in polite speech, which the vulgar yet avoid. In all languages some things have been admitted under no other rule than that of euphony, many things formerly in our own; but now, with an affectation of correctness, often widely mistaken, all concession to euphony is denied.

English speech has rarely any material cacophony in the middle of words, except what may arise from the too common practice of indistinct delivery; but in terminations it too certainly abounds. Much however may be obviated or concealed by judicious disposition. A well-eared poet will of course avoid cacophony in rimes, and in the conspicuous parts, especially the last syllable, of any verse. A long vowel in the final syllable of a large proportion of the first verses of *Paradise Lost*, contributes not a little to the grandeur and solemnity of the effect.

Pope

Pope has had general credit for what are called rich rimes; tho his higher respect justly directed to that powerful closeness of phrase, in which he singularly excels, has led him to admit some rimes rather cacophonous. The word *KING* is certainly not euphonous, nor of dignified sound; the vowel is short and close, and the following consonant, one consonant expressed by two characters, the most cacophonous in our pronuntiation. Nevertheless the idea conveyed obviates any impression of lowness. Whether however it was for the dignity of the idea or the opposite quality of the sound, that Pope chose it for the first rime of his *Essay on Man*, with cacophony doubled by an added *s*, appears doubtful. He has indeed not scrupled the termination in *ing*, for the first rime of his translation of the *Iliad*, but the example is not to be recommended. Terminations in a long vowel, or a liquid consonant preceded by a long vowel, will be most euphonous. The termination in a liquid consonant preceded by a short vowel, tho less rich, will make a pleasant variety. That of a mute preceded by a long vowel will be wholly unobjectionable, rich without any cacophony, if a vowel begin the following word, as in the first verse of *Paradise Lost*. These however would, in our language, be limits too narrow for the poet; and the ear practised in our versification will take no offence at the conclusion of the second line of *Paradise Lost*, where a long vowel is followed by two consonants within the

same syllable, and two consonants begin the next verse. But here it is relieved by the whispered syllable which must follow the mute *t*, and which, at the end of a verse, at least to ears habituated to it, may be not without its grace. The judicious poet however will be sparing of such accumulation of consonants. The rest of the opening of the *Paradise Lost* is perhaps among the most perfect models of the best euphony, as well as of the best harmony, of which our language is capable,



## SECTION XVII.

## Of GRAMMAR.

THE Harmony of Language is materially interested in GRAMMAR, inasmuch as the varieties of grammatical form and grammatical order furnish the principal means for the harmonious arrangement of words in sentences. A wide field is thus indicated, in which however it is not intended here either to expatiate or to take any regular road; some observations only are proposed, and not a treatise.

In the earliest ages of English literature, the analysis of the language could not but engage some attention from those required or desirous to write in it. Nevertheless Ben Jonson's compendious grammar, printed among his works, is perhaps the oldest now extant. But tho already in his time the language had been cultivated with a success which, in some branches, has not been since equalled, yet in our universities and principal schools it remained wholly neglected. Scholars might gain its grammar, if fancy so directed their diligence, by comparing its forms and phrases with those of two very different speeches, the antient Greek and Latin. But the inconvenience resulting from the neglect was not small. While

a few men of extraordinary talents availed themselves of the inherent powers of the language to produce some unrivalled works, it was in general written and spoken inelegantly and incorrectly; inso-much that Swift, esteemed the purest writer of that commonly called the golden age of English letters, has expressed his opinion of the depravity of the common practice of his time, in strong terms. His project for an academy of the language, in imitation of the Italian and French, has not been generally considered with favor by our men of letters who have noticed it. the French academy itself has been the scoff of some eminent wits even of its own nation: and yet I cannot scruple to declare my opinion that the French language owes much to its academy, and that the English might have profited from a similar institution conducted with equal judgement.

But the spirit of trade, among its extraordinary operations in this country, has done that for the litterature, which the spirit of litterature itself seems rather to have scorned. A society of booksellers, employing Samuel Johnson, produced that highly valuable work, imperfect as it is, a stupendous work for a single man, his English dictionary. About the same time, Harris, Sheridan, and others contributed to make the study of the English tongue an object for the English scholar; but the attention of our universities seems to have been roused to it principally by the classical authority of  
 bishop

bishop Lowth. That eminent critic was the first to mark for the scholar's attention the importance of the Anglofaxon tongue, the groundwork of the modern language, on which its analogy wholly rests. He first exhibited in just light the precision which the English derives from its articles, beyond any other known language, even the antient Greek. He first completely vindicated the cases of the nouns against the mistakes of former writers, some of great authority, which had produced some injury to the speech, and threatened much more. He went beyond all before him in explanation of the superior merits of the English VERB. Samuel Johnson has, with a kind of dignified carelessness, noticed the difficulties of the English future, as what he was unable completely to explain. Every English child feels the difference of *shall* and *will*, and uses each in its proper place; yet Johnson's examples, to which he refers for all explanation, have been found of little avail to direct foreigners, or even the Scotch and Irish, to the proper practice. Lowth has gone far beyond Johnson; but even his explanation, just, and perhaps complete in logical distinction, has been found insufficient to direct use.

A manuscript treatise on English grammar, unfortunately little more than begun, by the late Mr. Thomas Whateley, secretary of the treasury under Mr. George Grenville, was several years ago, but not till after the author's death, put into my hands. It promised to have been, had it been  
finished,



finished, the completest analysis extant of any language. I have often regretted that I did not profit more from it while I had the means; I made no notes from it, but his explanation of the English future has remained in my memory. Auxiliary verbs, he said, are none of them meer auxiliaries; all have their proper powers as principal or substantive verbs. To *will* is yet in English a complete verb, declaring the act of volition in general. *Shall* is no longer a complete verb, but its independent meaning is nevertheless clear; it declares volition also, but volition directed to a particular object, indicating the intention to compel. English verbs then, not having, as those of some other languages, the convenience of an appropriate form to indicate futurity, are assisted by the expedient, common in other languages for other tenses, of introducing an auxiliary verb. The verb to *will* presented itself, marking futurity clearly, and, for the second and third persons, commodiously; because, as we can exercise no volition for others, its power of indicating volition introduces no ambiguity; it can imply futurity only. But for the first person it is far from equally commodious; because it cannot there mark futurity exclusively of volition. Resort therefore was had to the verb *shall*, which indicates futurity equally as *will*; and, as we cannot exercise volition for others, so neither do we exercise compulsion upon ourselves. In the first person, therefore,

*shall*

*shall* indicates simple futurity, as clearly as *will* in the second and third. The proper English future tense then is not, as it stands in all our grammars, *I shall* or *will* go, *thou shalt* or *wilt* go, and so forth. The phrases *I will* go, *thou shalt* go, *he shall* go, *we will* go, *you shall* go, *they shall* go, are not future tense; the verbs *will* and *shall*, in those phrases, are not auxiliary but principal verbs, declaring volition concerning the action indicated by the verb go. The proper English future runs simply, *I shall* go, *thou wilt* go, *he will* go, *we shall* go, *you will* go, *they will* go.

In this exposition I fear my memory may not have served me to do justice to the clearness and precision of Mr. Whateley; tho I hope the substance of his idea will be found explained sufficiently to be useful. I shall proceed to a few farther observations, without being able to say, from my recollection, whether he had touched on any of them.

The distinction of *shall* and *will*, constantly made in English speech, tho hitherto so deficiently explained in grammars, gives a clear superiority of precision to the English over all those languages which have the advantage, in form, of expressing the future by a single word; for in the future tense of all with which I am acquainted, the declaration of volition is confounded with the simple future. Our grammars of other languages therefore, in translating the future tense, are correct, in giving  
*shall*

*shall* or *will*, throughout the persons; because the futures of those languages imply both *shall* and *will*, leaving distinction to be gathered from the context. But as in English the distinction between *shall* and *will* is strong and clear, that distinction ought to be exhibited in every grammar in which it is proposed to explain another language by the English, or the English by another language, as well as in grammars simply English.

It thus appears that the confusion of *shall* and *will*, commonly made by the Scotch and Irish, is, in the more ordinary occurrences of speech, no more than is equally made in those languages which we admire as the most perfect, the Greek and Latin, and in the principal daughters of the Latin, the Italian, Spanish, and French. But as necessity sometimes will occur in all languages to express clearly and decidedly the distinction between volition or intended compulsion, and the simple future, all the languages more commonly known among us, have their resources for the purpose, which are occasionally brought into use. All have a verb congenial with our verb to *will*. The distinct force of *shall* is very nearly expressed in French by the verb *devoir*, and in Italian by *dovere*. In Latin the gerund and the future participle assist. But in our language, were the Scottish confusion of *shall* and *will* to grow, instead of being, as at present, superior to all others in the constant precision of its future tense, it  
would



would be inferior, and indeed very defective; as it would want the advantages which the French, Italian, and others actually possess, and which all languages need, for occasional discrimination <sup>a</sup>.

Analogous to the distinction of *shall* and *will*, is that of *should* and *would*. The proper English conditional is not *I should* or *would*, *thou shouldst* or *wouldst*, and so forth, but *I should go*, *thou wouldst go*, *he would go*, *we should go*, *you would go*, *they would go*. But here is to be observed a distinction wholly unnoticed by Lowth. The irregular verb *should*, beside its proper sense as the conditional of *shall*, has, from early times, obtained use in another sense as equivalent to *ought*. When it bears this sense, it is not properly an auxiliary in any person, and therefore cannot, in

<sup>a</sup> The modern Greek, among its misfortunes, having lost the future form of the parent speech, has been reduced to seek an auxiliary for expressing future time. The verb *θίλω*, analogous to the English *will*, has been adopted, and, as the parent language, equally with the Latin and its daughters, confounded the simple future with the future of volition and compulsion, more discrimination was not sought by the modern Greeks: they say *θίλω γράψαι*, I shall or will write, *θίλεις γράψαι*, thou shalt or wilt write, *θίλει γράψαι*, he shall or will write, *θίλομεν γράψαι*, and so forth. They have indeed a more elegant form, tho less used, *θι-γράψω*, *θι-γράψεις*, *θι-γράψει*. This, were the language more cultivated, might possibly gain more use, which would be attended with the advantage of leaving the verb *θίλω* more disengaged for the necessary purpose of distinctly expressing volition.

any person, be changed for the verb *would*. If in the first person, *I should go* is said for *I ought to go*, so equally in the second and third person, it must be *thou shouldest go*, *he should go*. It had been better for the precision of the language if this sense of the word *should* had never obtained, but were limited to the verb *ought*, which is appropriated to it.

The learned French printer Estienne, who has called himself Stephanus, and whom our learned commonly call Stephens, and, it should be added, to whom the cause of letters has great obligations, flattered his fellowcountrymen, and perhaps himself, with the idea that the French verb has peculiar congeniality with the Greek. I think it may easily be shown that the French verb, holding close congeniality with the parent Latin, has little with the Greek; but that the English, superior to all by many advantages, inferior to all by some deficiencies, has altogether far closer congeniality with the Greek than the French, the Italian, the Spanish, or their parent the Latin. Our grammars of modern languages abound, not less than those of the antient, with erroneous versions of tenses; a fault imputable much less to the authors of those gram-

<sup>b</sup>The Scoticians *I'll be obliged to you* and *I'd be obliged to you*, have been of late years creeping into polite use among careless polite speakers, perhaps heedless whether they intend them as abbreviations of *I will* or *I shall*, *I would* or *I should*. Any growth of the practice would be very injurious to the language.

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mars than to the deficient investigation of English grammar itself. In any conversation with foreigners, however, the fact will become obvious. I remember being in company where a French officer said to an English officer, ignorant of the French language, 'How long are you in the service?' The Englishman showing that he did not understand the question, the Frenchman resorted to a closer translation of the phrase he would have used in his own language, 'How long is it that you are 'in the service?' The Englishman replied, 'You mean to ask how long *I have been* in the service.' 'I dare say I do,' replied the Frenchman, 'but,' turning then to another, who had been conversing with him in French, he added, 'were I to say in my own language, 'Comme longtems y-a-t-il que vous avez été au service?' it would imply 'that you are no longer in the service.'

Here is indicated an important distinction between the French tense formed with the auxiliary *avoir* and the English formed with the auxiliary *have*, which ought to be noticed in all grammars, and is noticed in none. The French *j'ai fait*, and the Italian *ho fatto*, are truly preter-perfect; but the English *I have done*, is not preter-perfect, but strictly present-perfect. In French and Italian they say, 'je l'ai fait hier,' 'l'ho fatto venti anni sono.' But in English, 'I have done it yesterday,' or, 'I have done it five minutes ago,' would  
be



be a solecism. 'I have done,' can be said only of the present completed: if a certain time past, howsoever short, is indicated, the phrase must be, according to circumstances, 'I did,' or 'I had done.' The English, differing here from the Latin, equally as from the French and Italian, accords exactly with the Greek.

But the English does not correspond exactly with the French, Italian, or Latin, in any tense of the indicative mood, except perhaps that called plu-perfect. *Scribo, scrivo, j'écris*, are to be translated sometimes *I write*, sometimes *I am writing*; the sense differing occasionally in all the languages, the form in English alone. The Italian indeed has a power beyond the French and Latin, and approaching, perhaps reaching the English, in its phrase *sto scrivendo*. Analogous to this is the Greek, *τυγχάνω γράφειν*. Phrases so get their shades of meaning from the custom of the day and place, and the Greek language was spoken through so many centuries, and over so many countries, that to say any Greek phrase was confined to any precise meaning, from Homer's age to that of Longinus, in all the parts of the world where Greek was the common speech of the polite and learned, would be too much, perhaps, for the scholar of the most extensive reading and most tenacious memory. Hence possibly this use of the verb *τυγχάνω* is so little noticed in dictionaries. Hence also apparently

parently the Greek language remains altogether so defectively illustrated in them<sup>c</sup>.

Proceeding with the tenses, we find the Italian *cantavo* and *cantai*, and the French *je chantois* and *je chantai*, mark distinctions which not only the English cannot express, but neither the Latin, tho they are formed from the Latin *cantabam* and *cantavi*, nor, I think, the Greek. It will be obvious, in translating French and Italian, that *cantavo* and *chantois* are to be translated sometimes *I sing*, sometimes *I was singing*; *cantai* and *je chantai*, are always simply *I sing*, but have a more limited use. The English has a precision nevertheless in the phrase *I was singing*, which the French cannot reach; tho possibly the Italian may by the phrase *stavo cantando*. The necessity of explanation for the barbarian conquerors of the Roman empire, who did not readily comprehend the distinctions of the simple tenses, appears to have produced the compound tense, *ho cantato, j'ai chanté*; and hence perhaps the laxitude of its import in all the daughters of the Latin, in which it so remarkably differs from the English tense compounded with *have*. *Ha cantato, ho scritto, il a chanté, j'ai écrit*, must often be translated by the English aorist, *he sung, I wrote*; perhaps oftener than by the present-perfect, *he has sung*,

<sup>c</sup> I have been told that the learned author of the *Lexicon Aristophanicum* set out with the bold purpose of going through the principal Greek Classics in the same way in which he has executed that excellent work. The project is of magnitude enough to require the united labors of many learned men, and would indeed be worthy of a university.

*I have written*, whose import is strictly limited. Thus different languages have their peculiar powers, with distinctions which those who speak them feel, but sometimes too nice for description.

The French critics have claimed, for their language, a superiority over the Italian and Spanish in the precision of their tense derived from the Latin preter-perfect, *je chantai, je fis*: it cannot be used, they say, but in speaking of time past at least by a day: to designate time within the existing day, the compound tense must be employed, *j'ai chanté, j'ai fait*. If this definition of the limitation is accurate, I must own I am not aware of its value. The advantage of designating precisely the present-perfect, and committing the past to an aorist, as in Greek and English, is what those whose language possesses it will miss in a language where it fails. But in claiming a precision with regard to the designation of past time by the simple tense, which, if at all existing, is peculiar to the French, the laxitude of the compound tense is admitted. The difference seems to be that the simple tense can indicate only the past-perfect; the compound tense may indicate either the present-perfect, or the past-perfect.

A passage in Pliny's preface to his natural history, where he speaks of the signatures of the antient painters and sculptors upon their works, appears to indicate that he considered the Latin tense, commonly called preter-imperfect, as equivalent, or nearly so, with the Greek aorist, and the Latin preter-perfect as corresponding or nearly corresponding with



with the Greek perfect. It behoves us to respect any information on such a subject from such authority, which it were most absurd for a modern to controvert; but we should be careful not to take it for more than has been intended. We may gather, I think for certain, among the Greek and Latin authors, that those tenses were far from corresponding always and exactly in the two languages. In narration, we find, among the Greek writers, the aorist is of much more frequent use than the perfect, and, on the contrary, among the Latin writers, the perfect is of much more frequent use than the imperfect. Difference appears thus decidedly indicated. What the difference was can only be gathered from observing how those tenses, in the two languages, must, in their various combinations with other words, be rendered in our own language. Frequently then the Latin imperfect is found corresponding with that English tense which is compounded with the present participle; as in Horace, 'Ibam (I was going) forte via sacra,' whereas I doubt if ever this English tense will be found corresponding with the Greek aorist. Again the Latin perfect frequently, indeed most frequently, requires to be rendered by the English simple tense, 'I went, he made,' and the Greek aorist is generally found corresponding with the same English tense. But the Greek perfect tense will, I believe always, require the English compound tense, 'he has made.'

With regard to the double aorist and double future of the Greek, I will venture to own I accede

intirely to Mr. Payne Knight's opinion, that they are two in form only, and one in import; being but varieties of dialect, which have happened both to obtain the sanction of common use in the new Attic, on its becoming the universal language. Nor is our own language without analogous circumstances. We have a double genitive case, that of the Saxon idiom, 'Peter's brother,' and that of the Norman, 'the brother of Peter.' We have a double mode of comparison, 'fairer,' 'fairest,' and 'more fair, most fair;' and for several tenses of our verbs we have a choice of form, 'I loved' and 'I did love.'

But, in hazarding these remarks, especially those on the Greek tenses, it might appear a deficiency to omit notice of Samuel Clarke's proposed explanation of them, among his first notes of that edition of Homer, which has procured him a high reputation throughout Europe; tho I cannot speak of it without incurring perhaps greater hazard, by declaring that his explanation is, in my opinion, not only very unsatisfactory, but full of error. It has evidently been Clarke's misfortune, in common perhaps with some other considerable classical scholars, to have been scantily versed in any modern language, even his own. Had he had any familiarity with English speech, in any extent of communication among men, he could not have given phrases such as *It is in building, it was in building, it will be in building*, as tenses of the verb *to build*. It were superfluous to notice his French. The Greek tense commonly called preter-perfect, he has conceived

conceived and explained well, but exemplified ill; as ill in Latin as in French; and well in English, only in his examples of improper phrase. One general caution, however, he gives, which deserves attention: ‘*Temporum, in sermonis contextu, ratio tum constat, cum inter se respondeant tempora; non quæ iisdem nominibus sint à grammaticis definita, sed quæ apto connexu, & apposite ad scribentis mentem exponendam, cohæreant.*’ But, to judge of this, there must be something beyond grammatical theory, that feeling of language, which children so readily catch, and adults so hardly. By that alone, I apprehend, it can be determined that, to say in French, ‘*il le fit ce matin,*’ is improper; but the corresponding phrases in Italian, ‘*lo fece questo mattino,*’ and, in English, ‘*he did it this morning,*’ are good; while, in French, ‘*il l’a fait hier,*’ and in Italian ‘*l’ha fatto jeri,*’ are both proper, but in English, ‘*he has done it yesterday,*’ is an intolerable solecism. Neither in Latin, nor in any modern language that I know, can the Greek tenses of the infinitive mood and participle be illustrated; whence even to conceive those several shades of meaning, by which undoubtedly they contributed to the precision of that incomparable speech, is now become difficult. I remember, in the highlands of Scotland, meeting with an English inn-keeper, an intelligent man, who had been established there some years. In constant communication among the highlanders, and under continual



necessity for using words of their language, he had hardly learned to put three properly together; while his children, with no other instruction than what arose from the same communication, had acquired facility of speaking Gaelic equally as their native speech, and served him as interpreters. Perhaps, were the Greek learnt at a very early age, a child might acquire, from practice among the best writers on subjects not beyond his capacity, a feeling of the differences indicated by the various use of the Greek tenses of the infinitive and participle.

We are apt to overlook peculiarities in our own, and to be struck with circumstances, whether of excellence or deficiency, in other languages, in proportion as they differ from our own. Thus the want of the present tense in Hebrew and the agnate languages, including the Welsh, surprises us. The inability of the Welsh to say simply ‘I believe in God,’ whence the first article of the creed is expressed by the future, ‘I will believe in God,’ appears almost a portentous anomaly. But it is little observed that, in our own language, which has no simple form appropriated to the future, the present is sometimes used with a future signification. The phrases ‘What do you read tomorrow?—I go to London next week;—He returns to Oxford after the vacation;’—are perfectly authorized by custom; and being as clearly intelligible as if the auxiliary indicant of futurity were used, that auxiliary is perhaps not inelegantly omitted.

The advantage possessed by the English over the daughters of the Latin, in its genitive case, tho sometimes involving cacophony, is yet often for power of expression, often for variety, and often for means of poetical harmony, highly valuable. But the English has a mode of bringing two substantives together, without either genitive case or preposition, unknown equally in Greek and Latin, and in all the languages derived from the Latin. It is called by Lowth, the substantive ‘becoming an adjective, or supplying its place; being prefixed to another substantive, and linked to it by a mark of conjunction; as *sea-water*, *land-tortoise*, *forest-tree*.’ I do not recollect where I have seen this mode of syntax called ‘the concord of substantives by apposition.’ It has great conveniencies, and has hardly, I think, received from grammarians the attention it deserves.

Our language possesses another advantage over the daughters of the Latin in its forms of comparison for so large a proportion of its adjectives. Its choice of forms, and power of using both, may give occasional advantage, perhaps even over the Latin and Greek; as in this example from Young:

Of Friendship’s fairest fruits the fruit most fair

Is Virtue, kindling at a rival fire.

In a recent grammar, Lindley Murray’s, which seems to have obtained a merited vogue for school-use, it is well observed that phrases warranted by the custom of general speech, however apparently

anomalous, should not lightly be altered under the idea of reducing them to grammatical rule. Indeed we ought to be very sure of what we are about before we attempt to exercise on our language the spirit of what the French used to call purism. If we search deep enough we shall generally find that, tho our forefathers were sometimes wrong, for wrong will mix itself among the works of men, yet they were often right where, from alterations through time, it is not now immediately obvious to every-one how they were right. The author of that grammar himself affords an instance, which I shall the less scruple to notice, because the general merit of the work might well bear the indication of a greater deficiency. He has explained ingeniously, and yet I think not truly, the ground on which, contrary to the general rule of the language, the article is often prefixed to the adjective *many*, and yet the proper explanation is ready in Johnson's dictionary. It is there shown that *many*, in our old language, was a noun substantive, meaning a *multitude*: it remained so in Shakespear's time, and perhaps may be not improperly used so still. It is however now mostly used as an adjective, but with more than one circumstance indicating its former rank; for not the article only, but an adjective at the same time, is often joined with it, as *a great many*. When a substantive follows, indeed, the particle *of*, as sign of the genitive case, is not admitted: we say *a great many*



*many men, a great many horses.* But this seems merely an Anglosaxonism, preserved in familiar speech. In the old language the phrase corresponded exactly with the Latin *magna multitudo hominum*. With us the distinguishing form of the genitive plural is lost, and the custom of speech has omitted, in this phrase, to introduce the supplementary preposition. But how is it then that we prefix the article to the word *few* as well as to the word *many*? I think merely from the frequent use of the word *few* in opposition to the word *many*; whence has arisen the imagination of an analogy which has no existence; for *a great few* would be an offensive anomaly: with the word *few*, as a proper adjective, we use an adverb and not another adjective, to indicate quality; we say not *a great few*, but indifferently *very* or *a very few*. It were well for our language if false notions of analogy had done it no other mischief.

Augments, especially the vowel *a*, were formerly often prefixed to words merely for euphony; with better judgement than in modern times, they have been through an unadvised spirit of purism omitted. It is still customary in colloquial language, and even necessary to the sense of phrases, to prefix the augment *a* where hardly anybody any longer dares to write it; tho Samuel Johnson, in his dictionary, shows his own approbation of the practice, and warrants it by high authority. ‘*A*,’ he says, ‘is placed before a participle or participial noun;’  
adding,

adding, 'it is considered by Wallis as a contraction of *at*, when it is put before a word denoting an action not yet finished, as *I am awalking*.' This opinion of Wallis carries far more show of reason than the learned Clarke's proposed purification in his phrase *it is in building*. But how is it applicable to such words as *alike*, *alive*, *anew*, *afresh*, *aloud*? of which it is so become a component part that it cannot be displaced. I think, for the solution, we need go hardly farther than the very first article of Lye's Anglofaxon dictionary: '*A*,' says that able antiquarian, 'is an initial augment, commonly altering nothing in the sense of the word; whence in the modern language it is generally omitted: Thus from the Saxon *abpræcan* we have the English *to break*. And it is to be observed that *a*, *be*, *for*, *ge*, and *to*, are often indifferently and interchangeably prefixed to the passed tenses of verbs, to participles of the passed tense, and to verbal nouns.' '*Ge*,' then he says, under its proper head, 'is commonly, in composition, a meer expletive which was afterward changed into simple *y*, as *gepputen* into *ywritten*, *geclýpod* into *ycleped*, *gebrocen* into *ybroken*.' But it seems evident that the harsh hissing sound of *g*, for which our present speech seems to have been indebted, doubtfully whether to the French or Italian, but perhaps to both, was unused by our Anglofaxon forefathers; the Saxon *g*, like the gamma of the modern Greeks, having, before *e* and *i*, the soft

sound

found only of our *y*. The augments *ȝe* and *a* therefore, in the pronuntiation of our forefathers, were not so wide in found as the modern *g* would make them; and having been interchangeably used, they might easily, among the irregularities of our old orthography, come to be indifferently represented by *a* or *y*.

The Saxon *y* seems to have been purely a vowel. In its modern power, when prefixed to other vowels, contested among grammarians whether a vowel or a consonant power, it is evidently the genuine successor of the Saxon *ȝ*. In Chaucer's age we find a simple *y* the common prefix to participles, which was affected still by Spenser. In Shakespear's works, as they have been printed, it is I think no longer found; but the prefix *a* is common, and not at all confined to familiar dialogue or the mouths of low characters. Wolsey says,

————— His greatness is aripening :

and Macbeth,

I'gin to be aweary of the fun :

and Henry the Fourth,

Not an eye

But is aweary of thy common sight.

This augment, patronized in Addison's time by eminent writers, and not yet wholly obsolete, is often essential to euphony, often favorable to harmony, and sometimes even necessary to express or ascertain a meaning. But the printers, whose mistake may better find excuse than the negligence



gligence of authors, made the augment a separate particle, instead of a part, as it properly is, of the following word, and thus contributed not a little to spread their own mistake, and inlance the growing confusion. The augment thus appearing an awkward anomaly, and the spirit of purism growing while the trouble of inquiry was avoided, tho the voice still gives it feariefsly to the ear, the press hardly dares any longer offer it to the eye. In lord Melcombe's diary, this phrase occurs : ' The princess and the children *went walking*.' I can hardly think lord Melcombe wrote so. *Went hobbling*, is an English phrase: *went walking*, may be an English phrase too, but conveying a sense different from what the context shows the writer to have intended. Neither Swift nor Addison would have scrupled to write the phrase as it is still spoken, and must be by those who desire to be understood, *went awalking*. For the augment is here clearly not an expletive : it may be tried in the other phrase, *went ahobbling* ; where the sense is perverted by its insertion, as in the phrase from lord Melcombe by its omission.

But it is observed by Samuel Johnson, in his grammar, that ' there is a manner of using the ' active participle, which gives it a passive signi- ' fication : as *the grammar is now printing*, *Gramma- ' tica jam nunc chartis imprimitur* : *the brass is forging*, ' *æra excuduntur*. This,' he proceeds, ' is, in my ' opinion, a vitious expression, probably corrupted ' from a phrase more pure, but now somewhat ob-

' solete :

‘*solete*: *the book is a printing*; *the brass is a forging*; *a* being properly *at*, and *printing* and *forging* verbal nouns signifying action, according to the analogy of this language.’ The learned lexicographer appears to me clearly right in pronouncing the phrases vicious, where the augment is omitted, and purer where it is inserted; and tho I doubt his analysis of the purer phrases, yet I cannot hesitate to declare my opinion that their having become, as he says, somewhat obsolete, is a misfortune to the language, which it were advantageous, would imperious custom allow, to repair, by restoring the credit of a practice authorized by all our best writers, till within the eighteenth century.

That power of transposing words and inverting phrases, which the Greek and Latin so eminently possess, useful often for expression, is especially advantageous for variety of harmony. Modern languages fail in it, principally through the loss of the cases of nouns and participles, but none equally with the French. Hence perhaps it is, in some measure, that the French has not like the Italian and English, as well as the Latin and Greek, a poetical diction different from its prose diction. The French critics allow no phrase in poetry which may not be admitted in prose<sup>d</sup>. The power of both the Italian and English to admit inversions in poetry,

<sup>d</sup> Voltaire seems to have had this in view, when, to a remark excited by a different matter, ‘*La poésie Française est trop*  
‘*génée,*’

poetry, tho far below that of the Greek and Latin, is nevertheless considerable. Barretti, in his grammar, has given an example very ill chosen, to show the superiority of his speech: 'None,' he says, 'of the modern European languages suffer so many transpositions of words as the Italian. We may say, for instance, and with almost equal propriety;

Io sono amante di Laura.

Io sono di Laura amante.

Io di Laura sono amante.

Io di Laura amante sono.

Di Laura amante io sono.

Di Laura io sono amante.

Amante io sono di Laura.

Amante di Laura io sono.

Nevertheless he admits that, even in Italian, inversions should be sparingly used in prose. In poetical diction then the English can give, not only almost word for word every Italian variety of this very phrase, but, through the power of its genitive case, it can add varieties of which the Italian is incapable. We can very well say in English,

I am the lover of Laura.

I am of Laura the lover.

I of Laura am the lover.

Of

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'genée,' he has added, 'et très souvent trop profaïque.' Note on the character of Voiture, in the catalogue of writers of the age of Lewis the fourteenth.



Of Laura the lover am I.

Of Laura the lover I am.

Of Laura I am the lover.

The lover am I of Laura.

The lover of Laura am I.

I am Laura's lover.

Laura's lover I am.

Laura's lover am I.

If Barretti had been truly sensible of the beauties of his own language, he would rather have brought forward some brilliant passage from Ariosto or Tasso, than rest upon such a silly phrase. The description of the angel's mission to Godfrey, in the first book of the *Jerusalem Delivered*, imitated from Virgil and emulated by Milton, admirable in all, but I think clearly superior in Tasso, has beauties of such ingaging splendor as hardly to allow the reader's mind to sink to the consideration of the grammatical construction of the words in which they are conveyed : but after having admired the building, it may perhaps be worth his while, especially if he is himself an artist, to look a little at the materials, and the manner in which they are put together, to produce so splendid an effect. I will give here only a striking sentence or two.

Umane membra, aspetto uman si finse,

Ma di celeste maestà il compose :

Tra giovane e fanciullo età confine

Presse, ed ornò di raggi il biondo crine.

Ali bianche vesti, ch 'han d'or le cime,  
 Infaticabilmente agili e preste,  
 Fende i venti e le nubi e va sublime  
 Sovra la terra e sovra il mar con queste.  
 Così vestito indirizzossi all' ime  
 Parti del mondo il messaggier celeste.  
 Pria sul Libano monte ei si ritenne,  
 E si librò sull' adeguate penne.

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Dio messaggier mi manda : io ti rivelo  
 La sua mente in suo nome. Oh quanta speme  
 Aver d'alta vittoria, oh quanto zelo  
 Dell' oste a te commessa or ti conviene !  
 Tacque, e sparito rivolò del cielo  
 Alle parti più eccelse e più serene.  
 Resta Goffredo a i detti, allo splendore,  
 D'occhi abbagliato, attonito di cuore.

The reader who will take the trouble to consider how these lines are to be expressed in English and in French, will anticipate any remarks I could make on them. The superiority of the Italian will appear most striking in comparison with the French, because in words they differ little more than as two dialects of one language, and the conjugation of the verbs and declension of the nouns are precisely the same in both. The two great advantages of the Italian consist in its powers of transposition, and in the ability of its verbs to dispense with a preceding pronoun; less to be spared by the French, notwithstanding its apparent richness in conjugation, than even by the English. In construction

struction with verbs, whether for simplicity, or variety, the English cannot approach the Italian. In nouns, by its genitive case and its concord by apposition, and in adjectives by its forms of comparison, the English has the advantage.

IN PRONOUNS, where they become necessary, the English excels and the French singularly fails. English, French, and Italian, have all preserved the accusative case of the personal pronouns. But the French pronoun of the first person, in the nominative singular, is of so defective a sound as to be incapable of receiving emphasis; whence the resource of associating the accusative, sonorous, if not euphonous, whenever emphasis is requisite. *Lo farò, I will do it*, simply expressing the determination of the speaker to do anything, will be in French *je le ferai*. But if that opposition to some other person's doing is to be marked, which will require, in Italian, the expression of the pronoun, and, in English, emphasis on it, *lo farò io, I will do it*, then in French the accusative must be associated, and the phrase will be *moi je le ferai*, or, *je le ferai moi*. The same resource has been found useful also to assist the weakness of the nominatives of the other persons in the singular, and to relieve the frequent deficiency of decision of numbers in the third person (*il le feroit*, and *ils le feroient* being in sound the same) tho the pronouns of the first and second person plural are of themselves sonorous as well as euphonous; and hence it has gained use



through the persons of both numbers. But in power of emphasis, and use of the accusative, I think the English excels even the Italian. The following example happens to occur :

Whether the sun, predominant in heaven,  
 Rise on the earth, or earth rise on the sun,  
*He* from the east his flaming rode begin,  
 Or *she* from west her silent course advance,  
 With inoffensive pace, that spinning sleeps  
 On her soft axle, while she paces even,  
 And bears *thee* soft with the smooth air along,  
 Solicit not thy thought with matters hid :  
 Leave *them* to God above ; *him* serve and fear.

Par. Lost, b. viii. v. 168.

## SECTION XVIII.

Of ANALOGY in Language; ORTHOGRAPHY; COMPOSITION of Words; Effect of MONOSYLLABLES; MUSICAL TIME; DIALECTS.

ANALOGY, a harmony in structure, an obvious fitness of parts throughout a language, is a virtue in which the English is principally deficient. The oldest languages generally excel in it, and the new fail, commonly in proportion as they are in larger and more even parts compounded of different speeches. In completeness of analogy the Hebrew stands foremost; the Greek among languages commonly known, perhaps next; the Latin follows at wide interval; and again at wider still its purest offspring the Italian. Analogy has been broken in the Spanish by the large irruption of Arabic, and in the English yet more by that mixture of Norman French which Hume has reckoned so advantageous. The French itself has not received equal injury from similar intrusion: its failure, of which Voltaire, somewhere among his critical works, has strongly marked his feeling, was mostly born with it, through its less pure derivation from the parent Latin. He has illustrated his remarks by examples to which I regret that I cannot turn: but the compounds of the verb *rogo* perhaps may serve. In English we have *abrogate*, *arrogate*, *de-*

*rogate*, and *prorogue*; but, having no theme of any of them, they stand as primitives, unconnected with other words and with one another. So the French *abroger*, *arrogér*, *derogér*, and *prorogér*, the theme *roger* not being in the language, are, scarcely less than the English words, mutual strangers. The Italian, among its law-terms, acknowledges the verb *rogare*; but with a meaning so limited, that its words of more general use, *abrogare*, *arrogare*, *derogare*, and *prorogare*, not indeed quite such pilgrims as the corresponding words in French and English, stand however very much insulated in the classical part of the language.

It may be observed here, that our words *abrogate*, *arrogate*, and *derogate*, bear, in themselves, evidence that they have come to us immediately from the Latin, and not through the French; for their formation is not, like that of the corresponding French words, from the Latin verb, but from the participle. *Prorogue* has been derived from the verb; and yet whether it has come from the French, whose sound of the *g* in that word is so different, or from the Italian, whose sound of that letter is the same as in English, or immediately from the Latin, appears very doubtful.

Nor may it be wholly uninformative on our subject to notice the terms, in which Hume's eulogy of the mixture of French, in the English language, is expressed. They are, in the fourth chapter of his History of England, these: 'That great mixture



of French, which is at present to be found in the English tongue, and which composes the greatest and best part of our language.' Of twenty-five words here, exclusively of proper names, four at most, *present*, *composes*, *part*, and *language*, may have been derived through the French : *mixture* is merely Latin : all the rest are Saxon.

Nevertheless be it acknowledged, that we owe to the French many polysyllables, advantageous to the harmony of our language, through the relief which they afford against the prevalence of monosyllables in the part derived from the Saxon ; a benefit that may perhaps balance the evil of cacophony introduced with them. The great attending injury has been to the analogy of the language ; whose foundation is still purely Saxon, while the superstructure is composed too much of unconnected and even discordant parts. The variations of our nouns, the comparison of our adjectives, the conjugations of our verbs, the syntax of our sentences, are all Saxon. The rest, French, Latin, and Greek, is little more than a magazine of words ; rarely showing, except as in declension, comparison, or conjugation, they have been Saxonized, any relation to the rest of the speech, or even to one another. What analogy exists is almost all Saxon ; what is not so is in far less amount French than Latin.

The French language, since the brilliant days of Lewis the fourteenth, has obtained the praise of a

superior aptitude for social intercourse, and of a clearness and precision, making it peculiarly fit for public treaties and all communication between nation and nation; for which great purpose it has been allowed to supersede the Latin, formerly the common language of the diplomacy of Europe. But the former praise appears to me owing, not to the merit of the language, but to the talent of the people; relieving their language, poor in words, by phrases ingeniously devised; sometimes pleasing by their elegance, sometimes amusing by their oddity; dismissed as they grow trite, and supplied still with successors that find favor, through the fruitful ingenuity of the speakers. The latter praise I am disposed to allow to the language as it is written, but for the living speech I suppose it cannot be asserted. That the language has equal precision in speech as in writing, cannot possibly be maintained. No language within my knowledge so abounds in, what for oratory cannot but be highly disadvantageous, words alike in sound which in sense differ wholly. One word in French speech bears the several meanings of the several English words *have, has, art, is, and*. But for the written language its able cultivators have established all the English distinctions and more; it presents to the eye the various words *ai, aye, ayes, ait, ayent, es, est, et*; which, for the ear, if a consonant begin the next word, are one. Their object undoubtedly has been to maintain, in the written language,

means

means for clearness with conciseness, of which the living speech is incapable; and they have evidently succeeded. Possibly an ingenious and ready speaker may find expressions for all occasions, free from uncertainty of import; but that it may be done so easily, so variously, or always so concisely, in speech as in writing, cannot be contended. Without seeking for examples, I will mention one more accidentally occurring. One word in French speech, one only in sound, if a consonant follow, has six various significations; four of which are indicated by the English words *blood*, *sense*, *without*, *a hundred*, and the others, phrases in orthography, but simple syllables in speech, are not to be exactly rendered in English; *sang*, *sens*, *sans*, *cent*, *c'en*, *s'en*. Certainly the advantage of the written over the spoken language here is not small.

The care and judgement with which the French have preserved everything useful in their orthography, dismissed everything of meer incumbrance, added marks indicating the different powers of the same character, always respecting etymology, but always jealously asserting the proper analogy of their language, may well deserve our emulation. In one point indeed they have gone to an absurd extreme, barbarizing classical names, so as sometimes utterly to disguise them. This practice among us, once in vogue, has long since fortunately ceased. But, of whatever they have done well, we have done the contrary. Instead of maintain-



ing the analogy of our own language, we ask for rule rather from any other whence, well or ill, we have borrowed words. Instead of preserving everything useful in our orthography, and dismissing incumbrances, we rather cherish incumbrance, and dismiss the useful. Two hundred years ago Ben Johnson complained of the intrusion of *g*, without any warrant from etymology or common sense, into so many of our words where custom commands the barbarous combination *gh* to show itself in writing; tho' fortunately the fancy of those who would make our speech bend to what he justly calls our pseudography, has not yet prevailed so far as to procure it any respect in pronuntiation. Other such intruders have, since his time, been as whimsically established, while some letters useful for indication of sound have lost their places. It will be difficult to say how the useless *h* has found its way into the name *Thames*, unless from the absurd imagination of analogy between *Thames* and *Thomas*; or why, of the letters with which our forefathers, as late as Swift's time, wrote the word *shooe*, one necessary to indicate the pronuntiation has been dismissed, and the superfluous one preserved; unless to make our orthography amusing as a riddle. The prevailing orthography of the word *shew*, to which Samuel Johnson has declared his preference of *show*, appears to rest on similar ground. And indeed *shew* seems to have been originally no more than the preterit of *show*;

as *knew* of *know*, *grew* of *grow*, *blew* of *blow*; and so also *strew* of *strow*, and *chew* of *charw* or *chow*<sup>a</sup>; tho the modern practice of editors would make *strew* and *chew* the themes of the verbs. Fashion favors the introduction of French words, and defers often more than reasonably to French rule, and yet sometimes, where most reasonably it might, will not admit it. We find the orthography of words, adopted from the French, where it happens to assort with English pronuntiation, changed to something utterly out of reason, as *forain* and *soverain*, to *foreign* and *sovereign*. On the contrary where the French orthography, because out of all analogy with anything English, has been altered by our forefathers to an English form, our modern editors will restore the mysterious spelling; and the adopted words *poniard*, *puny*, *account*, are to put on what appears among English words a kind of masquerade dress, and be written *poignard*, *puisé*, *accompt*.

Our forefathers could generally find, within our own language, apposite words and phrases to ex-

<sup>a</sup> Thus Shakespear, in *Troilus and Cressida*:

Perchance, my lord, I *shew* more craft than love,

And *fell* so roundly to a large confession,

To angle for your thoughts.

Act iii. sc. 3.

And in an old translation of Plutarch's life of Themistocles:

Within these seas the brave Athenians *shew*

Their matchless valour, when they overthrew

The numerous nations that from Asia spring.

press ideas suggested in other languages ; or, as the French and Italians do still, would bend the foreign words and phrases to their own idiom. But the fashion of the present day requires all the preservation of French sound and accent that English mouths can give ; it will adopt French corruption of German, Italian, and even oriental names ; the English mouths are very apt to fail, and even become ridiculous, in aping French pronuntiation. The phrase *Belles Lettres*, foppish enough in its own language, has been sanctioned by academical authority as an English phrase, in a part of our island where science, in all branches long and ably cultivated, has been directed with much learning and talent and diligence to the investigation of the general principles of language. It seems not yet however to have gained establishment at Oxford or Cambridge ; where a just, or indeed any graceful pronuntiation of the phrase would certainly put many learned mouths to hard trial. Absurdity commonly induces difficulty and thence new absurdity. Plurals have mostly, in French, no other enuntiation than their singulars ; being distinguished only by the preceding article. For the phrase *belles lettres*, indeed, this signifies little ; because neither of the compound words has yet obtained any separate reception in our language : they are acknowledged only in combination, with a meaning no more admitting variety of number than our own equivalent phrases, *polite learning*, or *polite literature*.

But



But we have separate words, introduced lately, by very high authority, for which a plural, to be distinguished in speech somehow, is indispensable. We are not yet advanced enough, apparently, even for a secretary of state to venture upon the introduction of the French article, as an incident to English speech. Nothing remains then but to add the sound of our own common sign of the plural, an *s* for the eye, but a *z* for the ear, to a word otherwise of French pronuntiation. We are in a way thus to add not a little new intricacy to the science of English orthography, which has long been complained of by foreigners as of a difficulty almost insuperable, and even among ourselves is in no small degree a mystery. The new spelling-book must inform youth that *pot* no longer spells always *pot*; it is sometimes no more than *po*, as in *depot* and *entrepot*. In this new perversion of analogy in orthography then, we gain, in the plurals, sometimes confusion of meaning, and sometimes a kind of mule sound, too much French to be English, and yet not by any possibility to be made completely French. The newly adopted French word *depot*, becomes, in the plural, an old English word, *depose*. But no voice can add the English indication of the plural to the French nasal *n*, or, as they call it, the nasal vowel. Wherever that sound is the last of an adopted word, it must in the plural necessarily be changed, that the audible sign of the plural may follow. Thus the fashionable  
pronuntiation

pronuntiation of the word *environs* is now neither English nor French; tho already in Shakespear's time, at least as a verb, that word had acquired a completely English enuntiation, and is often found among our best poets, where the new pronuntiation, not recommended certainly by euphony, would destroy the verse.

With fashion, words and manner of pronuntiation sometimes come and go. Within the last half century the phrase *a-propos* had so obtained favor with polite mouths, that scarcely a comedy of the day was without it. If the new words *depot*, *entrepot*, *projet*, *precis*, with the phrases of a speech little capable of compounding words, phrases which in their adoption by us must stand as single words and primitives, *aide-de-camp*, *chargé-d'affaires*, and all others of the sort, having sufficiently answered their purpose of exhibiting the learning of the introducers, and exposing more than ninety-nine in a hundred of those under necessity of using them, to ridicule for inexpertness in the peculiarities of French pronuntiation, might fall quietly into the neglect and contempt in which *a-propos* now lies, our language would be fortunate.

The English language is monosyllabical in larger amount than, for the interest of its harmony, were desirable. Nevertheless Pope's example of ill effect in accumulation of monosyllables,

And ten low words oft creep in one dull line,

the

the terror of every young poet, has brought upon them perhaps a more general reprobation than they deserved, or than he in any probability intended; for they are found filling his verses sometimes with effect every way different. This indeed has not passed without notice from later critics. 'It has been said,' says Webb, in his *Observations on Music and Poetry*, 'that monosyllables are fit to describe a slow and heavy motion, and may be happily employed to express languor and melancholy. What inference are we to draw, should it appear that they may be as happily employed on the opposite motions and affections?

No: fly me, fly me, far as pole from pole.

I should answer that monosyllables are, for harmonical purposes, various in character. But moreover they have their peculiar virtues. They receive emphasis with superior effect. When not emphatical, they admit remission of the acute in all the degrees in which the syllables of any polysyllabical word admit or require it. Their sorts, for harmonical purposes, are characterized either by quantity or by accent; and by accent in all its varieties, from the strongest emphasis, to the lowest remission of tone. Their effect then, in the flow of language, verse or prose, will depend on the manner of combining their various sorts. Without an acute accent a monosyllable becomes, in harmonical effect, a part of the preceding or following



lowing word ; as the word *me*, in the line quoted by Webb from Pope ; whence the phrase *fly-me*, is as effectually to the ear one euphonous dissyllable as the word *slimy* or *briny*. In the spirited and easy flow of that line thus, its monosyllabism is apt to escape the ear's notice. And indeed the ten syllables are only in grammatical analysis ten words : the voice in proper delivery makes them, in effect for the ear, but five ; namely, one monosyllable, two dissyllables, a trissyllable, and again a dissyllable ; or, as some perhaps would think the delivery best, the phrases *fly-me-fly-me*, without sensible stop between them, would become one quadrisyllable, the penultimate only bearing the emphatical accent. So also in Milton's famous description of Eve :

Grace was in all her steps, heaven in her eye,  
In —————

Nor does it appear easy to say where, in the accumulation of monosyllables, with good combination, excess will begin ; tho' to venture upon fifty together will hardly be to be generally recommended, however we may admire it in the following passage of Shakespear :

Good friend, thou hast no cause to say so yet.  
But thou shalt have ; and creep time e'er so slow,  
Yet it shall come for me to do thee good.  
I had a thing to say : but let it go.  
The sun is in the heaven, and the broad day  
Attended —————

King John, Act iii.

Musical

Musical time having been, in the early part of this work, much referred to and rested upon, for illustration of the nature of poetical cadence, I shall desire to add a remark, possibly not useless toward obviating misconception. In the notation of music, now in use, the indications of measure, prefixed to every air, are, in a great degree, arbitrary marks: but formerly, when music was perhaps more studied as a science, tho less perfected as an art, the indications used had a more regular and obvious reference to what was indicated. The simplest common time was marked either by the letter C or the figure 2; the simplest triple time by the figure 3. When the air was such as to give the notes an arrangement in larger combinations, so that the recurrence of the musical accent, formerly noticed, instead of being on every second, occurred only on every fourth note, for instance every fourth crotchet, or portion of time equal to a crotchet, the performer was admonished of it by the prefixed mark  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; judiciously accommodated to its purpose, because where the principal musical accent is on every fourth note, or portion of time equal to a given note, there will be an inferior accent on every second. So also in triple time, if the return of the principal indicatory accent was more distant, so that any perceptible inferior accent intervened, the mark was  $\frac{3}{2}$ , and this was the old and proper indication of what is called minuet-time.

time. Now this time is in its nature more complex than musicians, for the purposes of music alone, have had occasion to notice. The movement is not simply triple, but a compound of triple and common time; the inferior accent marking what are in effect (perceptible enough when the ear attends for the purpose, tho otherwise nearly hidden by the general effect) three small bars of common time within each bar of triple time; and sometimes indeed indicated in notation by the manner of connecting the notes, thus



That particular character of air, distinguished by the name of Polonese, is a still more complex triple time, in which the common time within the triple is more strongly marked for the ear.

The proper indication of it would be that now appropriated to minuet-time,  $\frac{3}{4}$ ; the character of

the air depending much upon the occasional and frequent introduction of four notes for the complement of the interior cadence; as thus,



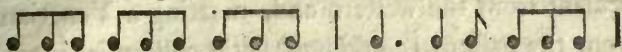
As then the minuet is a triplication of common time, so the jig is a duplication of triple time; and, instead of  $\frac{6}{8}$ ,

would be most properly marked  $\frac{2}{3}$ . It is remarkable that the simpler arrangements of time are those of the most cultivated music, and alone fit for great and solemn effect. The Polonese is suited

only



only to dance, or burlesk song; and in these a cadence yet more complex, for variety, may sometimes please, a triplication of triple time



found more among the music of the wilder than of more cultivated people, and perhaps most in Irish dances.

In every extensive nation, where the influence of a great metropolis does not extend, in perpetual circulation, through every part, DIALECTS will be various. In antient Greece, a narrow country, but very much divided by mountains and by politics, the four dialects, acknowledged as classical, were far from being all the varieties of the language. Thucydides informs us that the speech of Ætolia was hardly intelligible in any other part of Greece; and some specimens preserved by Xenophon, Aristophanes, and others, show that the Lacedæmonian differed considerably from the classical Doric. Nor will this appear wonderful to those who have had opportunity for any acquaintance with the varieties yet existing, tho fast wearing out, within England itself; a country little mountainous, and for centuries united under one government and one system of jurisprudence. Even at this day conversation would be difficult between a peasant from the Yorkshire dales, and one from the vale of Taunton or the hills of Dorset. In

other countries differences will be found yet greater. In Italy, even in Lombardy, where one river runs the length of the level country, a Piedmontese peasant from the western end, meeting a Venetian from the eastern, could hold little colloquial intercourse. It is indeed remarkable of Italy, a country so divided by impracticable mountains, that the harshest dialect of its language, and the softest, the Piedmontese and the Venetian, each extreme in its character, are spoken within one plain. But the Neapolitan is almost utterly unintelligible beyond its own district, tho' through all Italy the language is of Latin origin, with a few words only in one place more than another of Grecian, Gothic, or Saracenic birth, and the speech acknowledged by the polite and lettered is everywhere the same.

But cultivated and uncultivated dialects will little admit comparison; and cultivated branches from the modern European stocks are very few. While the courts of Aix and Toulouse existed, the Romanesk was a cultivated speech; but whether to be called a dialect rather of the French or of the Spanish, or a distinct language, as the Portuguese, may be matter of question. Of the branches of the Italian, the Venetian alone has been in any degree cultivated. Perhaps no secondary dialect of Europe can better claim a classical estimation than the Scottish branch of the English. The distinction of southern and northern  
English

English has already been noticed. The former has varieties, western, eastern, and midland; the latter, spreading almost from the middle of England over all the lowlands of Scotland, may perhaps be still more subdivided. But the cultivated dialects of the language are only two, the English of the government and jurisprudence of England, and the English of the government and jurisprudence of Scotland.

David Hume, who has rated Shakespear's merit altogether lower, I think, than any other British critic, reckons among his faults a deficiency in harmony. Samuel Johnson's opinion differed widely: 'To Shakespear,' he says, 'we must ascribe the praise, unless Spenser may divide it with him, of having first discovered to how much smoothness and harmony the English language could be softened. He has speeches, perhaps sometimes scenes, which have all the delicacy of Rowe, without his effeminacy. He endeavours indeed commonly to strike by the force and vigor of his dialogue, but he never executes his purpose better than when he tries to sooth by softness.' I will own my intire concurrence with Johnson, and I am persuaded it was not without a view to the superior harmony of Skakespear's versification, that Milton has called him 'sweetest Shakespear.' Nevertheless I think the difference of Hume's opinion may be accounted for, and it will



not be beyond the purpose of our inquiry to observe how.

In speaking of the extension of the Anglosaxon conquest over the lowlands of Scotland, Hume has said that the present Scottish dialect is the purest Anglosaxon anywhere now spoken. I wholly doubt this. Between the classical English and the cultivated Scottish, the difference is too small to be easily appreciated. Of provincial dialects, Hume probably knew only the Scottish. I believe it will be found that the western English, and perhaps some of the eastern, is hardly less Saxon than the purest of Scotland or the north of England. Numerous Saxon words and phrases indeed, unknown in the south, are found in the north, but many also exist in the southern speech which are peculiar to it.

This then is remarkable of the Saxon part of both dialects: with all the wide difference in the character and pitch of tones, the situation of the cadence-marking accent is found almost universally the same. But in words derived from the French and Latin it is otherwise, and the difference has been evidently increasing since Chaucer's time. Perhaps it cannot be better illustrated than by two occurrences in the House of Commons within memory. It was when sir Fletcher Norton was speaker, that the lord advocate of Scotland, Montgomery, moving for a committee

mittee of inquiry to be appointed, gave the strong accent, after the Scottish manner, to the first syllable of the words *committee* and *inquiry*; at the same time using, in the second syllable of the latter, the short sound of the fourth vowel, instead of the long sound of the first diphthong, which southern English pronuntiation requires. The speaker, tho in early life not without familiarity with the speech of the north of England, was puzzled by this disguise of the words; nor, tho they were, at his requisition, thrice repeated, was he inabled to put the question, till a member near the chair whispered him, with the English accentuation, what the learned mover meant. The other circumstance occurred in the contest of parties following the conclusion of the American war. A Scottish member, more remarkable for a powerful eloquence, than for pure English pronuntiation, in the course of a speech said, ‘I will not give my support to a cabal; ‘I will give my support to administration.’ This declaration, the part he meant to take having been before dubious, produced a marked sensation, with a cry of ‘hear, hear,’ which excited the curiosity of a member just then entering. Turning to old Pearson the doorkeeper, who happened to be at his elbow; within the door, he asked what the speaking member had said? ‘I do not know,’ answered Pearson, ‘what he has been talking about; only ‘I just heard him say he would give a ball and

‘a supper to administration.’ This strange perversion of the words, as jocular as it may appear, the old man made without any purpose of either joke or perversion; misled intirely by the learned member’s Scottish pronuntiation of the words *cabal* and *support*, with a long vowel in the second syllable of the former, as in the words *ball* and *bawl*, and the strong accent on the first syllable of the latter, as in the word *supper*.

I have been told by those who have conversed with David Hume that his pronuntiation was perfect Scottish. The language of Shakespear abounds in words of Latin origin, in the opinion of some critics, rather to excess. How the harmony of his verse would often be overthrown by pronuntiation such as that of the eminent persons just mentioned, will be obvious. It is owing to the prevalence of the Saxon idiom that, as the cadence of Scottish poetry is generally ready for the southern voice and pleasing to the southern ear, so the southern English poetry does not commonly offer material difficulties in its cadence for northern organs.

But an opinion has obtained currency, that it is of the genius of the English language to throw the acute accent as far back in the word as may be. All the ablest writers on the subject contradict this, and investigation in our poetry, upward to  
Chaucer,



Chaucer, will prove that the opinion is erroneous; yet it holds and seems even to be extending itself. The injury hence threatened to the whole body of our poetry is incalculable. The case of the word *subject*, may deserve consideration. All our dictionaries concur with all our poetry in asserting that the word so written, when a noun, should have the acute on the first, but, when a verb, on the second syllable. Nevertheless the new fashion, which has already established itself in the oratory of the bar, and of both houses of parliament, gives the acute to the first syllable of the verb, equally as of the noun. Let the consequence be observed in the following passages:

The angel——

Led them direct, and down the cliff as fast,  
To the *subjected* plain.

Milton, Par. Lost.

Think not, young warriors, your diminish'd name  
Shall lose of lustre by *subjecting* rage  
To the cool dictates of experienced age.

Dryden.

In one short view, *subjected* to our eye,  
Gods, emperors, heroes, sages, beauties lie:

Pope.

Suffice that Reason keep to Nature's road,  
*Subject*, compound them (*the passions*) follow her and God.

Pope's Essay on Man, b. 2. v. 216.

It is obvious how, in the three first examples, the new accentuation injures the measure, which, with the old, is perfect, and how, in the last, it makes the sense doubtful, which, with the old accentuation is clear. The orthography, indeed, of the word *subject*, in the too common way of English orthography, presents doubt to the eye; not at all distinguishing the verb from the noun. The able cultivators of French letters have not scrupled to bring, from another language, a mark used there for a very different purpose, to indicate, in their language, the different sounds represented by their character *e*; blameable perhaps only for preserving to it the name of accent, of which, in its use in their language, it has nothing of the nature. Their diligence, applied to the cultivation of English letters, would, with unquestionable propriety, have introduced the same mark for its original purpose, the distinction of accent; and then the verb *subject* would have been discriminated from the noun *subject*, for the eye as well as for the ear. The advantage would probably have followed, that the establishment of the mark for the eye would have prevented the corruption of the sound for the ear, and the harmony of English poetry, from Shakespear to Cowper, would not have incurred its present danger of becoming shortly as problematical as that of Chaucer. As the fashion stands, our language, without advancing at all toward the

precision of the French on paper, is losing its own precision in speech. That accentuation of the words *committee, inquiry, and support*, which a few years ago made the words unintelligible to English ears, may become established in English delivery, and the ablest men of the next century may be as unable to comprehend the harmony of Shakespear's, Milton's, Dryden's, and Pope's verses, as sir Fletcher Norton was to catch the purpose of the lord advocate's motion.

But through the unfortunate incorrectness of the early editions of Shakespear's works, which, of late years, the best abilities have been exerted, advantageously indeed, yet still with very deficient effect, to remedy, it is often impossible to know what failure in harmony should be attributed to the poet, and what to his editors. Higher matters have principally engaged the criticism of others; I will add a few words on his harmony. Shakespear has the credit of the invention of that form of verse, which has been noticed in this inquiry as the English dramatic verse, distinguished from the epic or heroic. 'He seems,' says Dennis, as quoted by Samuel Johnson, 'to have been the  
' very original of English Tragical harmony, that  
' is, the harmony of blank verse, diversified often  
' with dissyllable and trissyllable termination. For  
' this diversity distinguishes it from heroic harmony,  
' and, by bringing it nearer to common use, makes  
' it



‘ it more proper to gain attention, and more fit for  
 ‘ action and dialogue.’ Johnson adds, ‘ Perhaps  
 ‘ it would not be easy to find any author, except  
 ‘ Homer, who invented so much as Shakespear,  
 ‘ who so much advanced the studies which he  
 ‘ cultivated, or effused so much novelty upon his  
 ‘ age or country. The form, the characters,  
 ‘ the language, and the shows of the English  
 ‘ drama are his.’ But it is observable that not one  
 of his plays is, throughout, either prose or verse:  
 all are here one, there the other. Johnson has ob-  
 served that in many of them there is an evident  
 inferiority in the latter part, occasioned probably  
 by haste to bring the work to a conclusion, either  
 for fulfilling an engagement, or to use a transient  
 opportunity for profit. But generally his harmony  
 is good; often exquisite; and, in his higher-  
 wrought passages, often singularly adapted to the  
 expression required by the sentiment. Nevertheless  
 this appears to me, among the excellencies of his  
 versification, not least remarkable, that, without  
 the aid of rime, the common crutch and stilt of  
 poetry in all the languages of modern Europe, he  
 could make not only Horace’s ‘ *sermoni propiora*,’  
 diction approaching common speech but com-  
 mon speech itself, the commonest speech, pleasing  
 by its poetical music. Examples abound in his  
 works, not in the comic only, but in the tragic  
 stile. In the former they are large and striking in

the third act of *As-you-like-it*: in the latter they are larger and more striking in the second act of *Henry-the-eighth*; where the speech of the duke of Buckingham to the people is a singular model of the finest oratory, adapted to understandings the most uncultivated. In both comedy and tragedy they are unparalleled by any other poet in the English, perhaps in any language. Has it then been by a lucky chance only that Shakespear wrote often so harmoniously? or has he employed labor and study on humble language, and comic subjects, which he would not bestow where splendid diction and lofty sentiment would make any fault in versification more glaring and more intolerable? or is it not more probable that he, whose organs led him to singular sweetness of composition, where some rudeness might best have excuse, would be offended beyond others at the violation of measure to be found in some of his sublimest passages, as they stand published, and that at least the greater part of such irregularities should be attributed to his editors?

I have known it held by some men of respectable taste and learning, that, of all modern dialects, the Scottish-English most approaches the Dorian Greek in its peculiar fitness for pastoral poetry. Broadly stated, I think this involves error concerning both languages, tho, with modification, I believe it true of both. I imagine that if Gawin

Douglas

Douglas had been told that the Scottish, or Tyrtæus that the Doric, was particularly suited to pastoral poetry, they would have been at a loss to conceive on what ground it was asserted. The language of general polite use, as has often been observed of Virgil's, must always appear out of place in pastoral; and the languages of Gawin Douglas and Tyrtæus were those of polite use among the people for whom they wrote. But an uncultivated dialect, whatever may be the poetical reputation of Arcadian herdmen, can suit no poetry for a cultivated people. The speech of the highlands of Cyllene and Erymanthus would probably have been as unintelligible in the polite courts of Alexandria and Antioch, for which Theocritus wrote, as that of the Yorkshire dales or the Cheviot hills in the court of London, and, if understood, would have offended by its coarseness. Theocritus used the language of Syracuse, the largest city of the Grecian name; with a few words only added from the speech and songs of pastoral men. The Syracusan Doric, transported to Alexandria, or wherever the new Attic was the language of the polite and learned, and the dialect of Edinburgh, transported to London, or wherever the southern English may prevail, with the advantages of cultivation, would unite that deviation from general polite use which the character of pastoral poetry requires. To this combination then I think

is



is owing, whether intirely I will not say, but far principally, the peculiar fitness both of the Scottish-English and of the Dorian-Greek for pastoral poetry. Had Alan Ramsay been injudicious enough to have used the dialects of Galloway or Aberdeen, he would have failed equally with those who have attempted pastoral in the provincial dialects of the south of England.

The kingdom of Wesssex prevailing in the Saxon heptarchy, Winchester being the principal seat of political and jurisprudential business, Oxford the chief resort of the learned, London afterward superseding Winchester as the capital, and Cambridge rivalling Oxford as a seat of learning, the western and eastern Anglosaxon dialects became compounded to form the foundation of our present speech. Had the kingdom of Northumberland maintained the ascendancy it had once acquired, and preserved its dominion over the lowlands of Scotland, York might have become the capital of Great Britain, and London remained only the principal commercial town. The northern would then of course have been the cultivated dialect, the speech of the polite and learned. France apparently would have had a very superior language, had Toulouse become the capital instead of Paris. Italy could not have been more fortunate than in the prevalence of the Tuscan, nor perhaps Spain than in that of the Castilian. As the English was  
to

to be founded on some of the rough dialects of the Teutonic hords, the general prevalence of the western dialect has been perhaps altogether advantageous. The western indeed has been esteemed a dialect of peculiar coarseness, but its coarseness is of a kind readily admitting polish; in sound arising chiefly from the broadness of vowels and the frequency of diphthongs; in phrase from irregularities which polite use would of course arrange. It has given us nothing of the offensive guttural of the German, nothing of the offensive nasal of the French, nothing of that strong peculiarity of tones which distinguish its northern sister from all other dialects. Such as our language is, it is the speech of a people spread in all quarters of the globe, a principal remaining bond of two divided empires, and, for the benefit of both, richly fraught with excellent writings on all subjects. This speech it becomes us to cherish and preserve; to know its merits, that we may know how to ward it against injury, and how to maintain, if we cannot improve, its advantages. May the mite here offered contribute to those purposes!

## A P P E N D I X.

AWARE of the hazard of criticising language, but especially a foreign language, the risk of oneself mistaking, and the risk of failing to make oneself understood by others, for explanation of the hypothesis ventured, in the first article of the fifteenth section (p. 290.) concerning the loss of accent in the French language, I desire to refer to example within the English language. The two words *analogy* and *enallage* (tho the latter is of rare use, it may answer the purpose) have, in the flow of speech, sound so nearly the same, that the ear, unassisted by context, will hardly discriminate them. Alike in number of syllables, alike in situation of the acute, alike in proper pronuntiation of the eminent syllable *al*, the difference in the other syllables is too little marked to ascertain the word. If then the context does not mark it, if clear discrimination by sound becomes necessary, the resource for the English speaker is something very like ordinary French pronuntiation. Analysing the word into syllables, with an equal tone on each, *an-al-o-gy* or *en-al-la-ge*, the distinction becomes obvious.

In the same section and article (p. 291.) it is said that, in derivative words of the English language, the accent always adheres steadily to some one syllable of the root. A necessary distinction has been overlooked here: the assertion is just only of words of Teutonic birth: in words from Latin roots, whether immediately or through a French medium, varieties are found. Thus in the words *necessary*, *necessarily*, *necessity*, *necessitous*, *necessitate*, there is a change from the first



to the second syllable: in *sénate*, *sénator*, *senatòrial*, from the first to the third: in *órator*, *orátion*, *oratórical*; *sociable*, *affociate*, *society*, *affociátion*; *vários*, *váriosly*, *váriegate*, *váriegated*, *variety*, *variátion*, from the first to the second and third.

I am aware of the risk I incur by the freedom with which I have spoken of the French language. The greatest blemishes of that language, those defects which unfit it for serious purposes, and especially for public speaking, are the delight and admiration of many, for the amusement they afford. Eminent among these amusing defects are its abundant double meanings, which the English certainly cannot emulate, nor perhaps any other language. Holding their existence in the essence of the language, in speech, these blemishes have unfortunately been beyond the controul of its able cultivators, who, enough aware that they are blemishes, have, in its representation by letters, judiciously obviated them. Were those admired double meanings to be looked for in writing, the English, through the absurdity of its orthography, would beat the French far. The description in the earl of Northumberland's speech, in the beginning of Shakespear's Henry-the-fourth, is well known:

Even such a man, so faint, so spiritless,  
 So dull, so dead-in-look, so wobegone,  
 Drew Priam's curtain in the dead of night,  
 And would have told him half his Troy was burnt.

I have been assured there is in print a French translation of this play, whose author has been greatly relieved in the version of this passage by being led into a curious error,  
 through

through the prevailing fashion of our orthography to exhibit compound words decomposed. The difficulties of the passage, for turning into French, which will be obvious to all acquainted with the French language, are strongly shown in Le Tourneur's translation, which, in half as many words again, represents the original feebly, tho, as a French translation, with tolerable fidelity, thus :

‘ Tu as l'air de ce Troyen qui, sans voix et sans haleine,  
 ‘ défaillant et consterné, la mort dans les yeux, le desespoir  
 ‘ dans tous ses traits, ouvrit dans les ombres de la nuit pro-  
 ‘ fonde les rideaux du lit de Priam, et s'efforçoit de lui dire  
 ‘ que Troie étoit à moitié embrasée.’

Here ‘ so wobegone’ is rendered by the phrase ‘ le desespoir dans tous les traits.’ Whether indignant at the laxitude of this version, or how otherwise led so to deviate from the common French practice, the other translator, faithful to the words of his author, as they stand printed in some editions, has rendered them ‘ Ainsi, Douleur ! va-t'en,’

Not having been fortunate enough to find opportunity for obtaining assistance from any native Greek, since I resumed my inquiry with a view to its immediate completion, it must of course be with some hazard that I undertake any explanation of the modern Greek language ; and yet I am unwilling to omit such assistance as I may best give, to any who may have curiosity about the living relics of that speech to which, in the dead letter, we owe so much. In the translation of the beginning of the Pastor Fido, given in the fourth article of the fifteenth section (p. 329.) I take the word Ἀμείτε to be a word not of common use, but rather a poetical word, formed from the classical εἶμι. I suppose πόχετε, in the same line, to be a contraction of ποῦ ἔχετε, ποῦ being used

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sometimes for *who* or *which*, tho more commonly for *where*. In the third line, the last syllable of *συνήδησας* is the possessive pronoun, united with the preceding word, according to the common manner of the modern language, in consequence of losing its accent. Πόχει, in the fourth line, I reckon a contraction of *πὺ ἔχει*. Of the following word I take the first or two first letters to be the sign of the subjunctive mood *ῥα*, which occurs twice in the next line intire, as preceding a consonant, and once in the last line with the vowel elided, because a vowel follows; *ῥ' ἀγρυπνίσου*. Of the remainder of the word or phrase which stands printed *ναρῶν*, I cannot venture to explain my conjecture, farther than by referring to the following literal translation of the whole passage: ‘Go  
‘ you, worthy herdmen, who have inclosed in toils the terri-  
‘ ble and highly incensed animal, and, according to our cus-  
‘ tom, give the signal of the hunting, where it is to be, and  
‘ do it altogether. Let the bugle-horn be sounded, that eyes  
‘ may be awakened, and let voices be exerted to rouse all  
‘ hearts.’ The ‘disjecti membra poetæ’ are here so hardly, discernible, that it may be due to the original to show the reader, unversed in the Italian language, its superiority, as it may be shown even in a translation the most literal: ‘Go  
‘ you, who inclosed the horrible beast, and give the accustomed  
‘ signal of the future chace. Go, awakening eyes with the  
‘ horn, and hearts with the voice.’ Should the English sportsman desire explanation of the manner of hunting here adverted to, he may find it very completely and very amusingly given in Ridinger’s prints, representing the manner of hunting in the south of Germany at this day.

THE END.

Luke Hansard, Printer,  
 Great Turnstile, Lincoln’s-Inn Fields.





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